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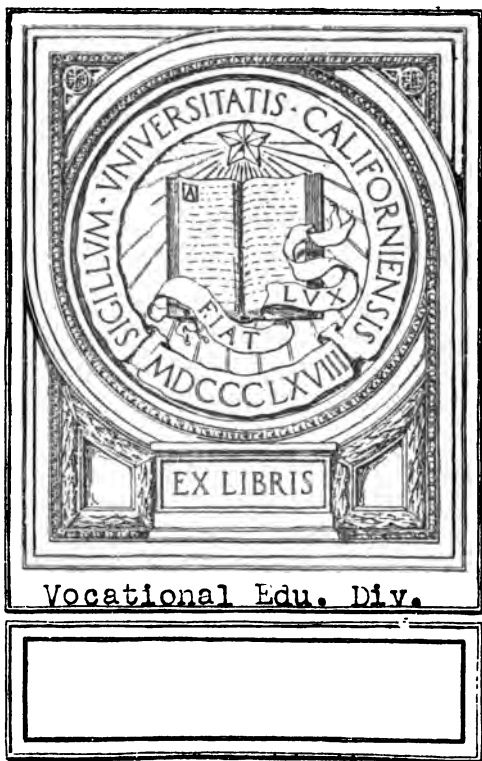
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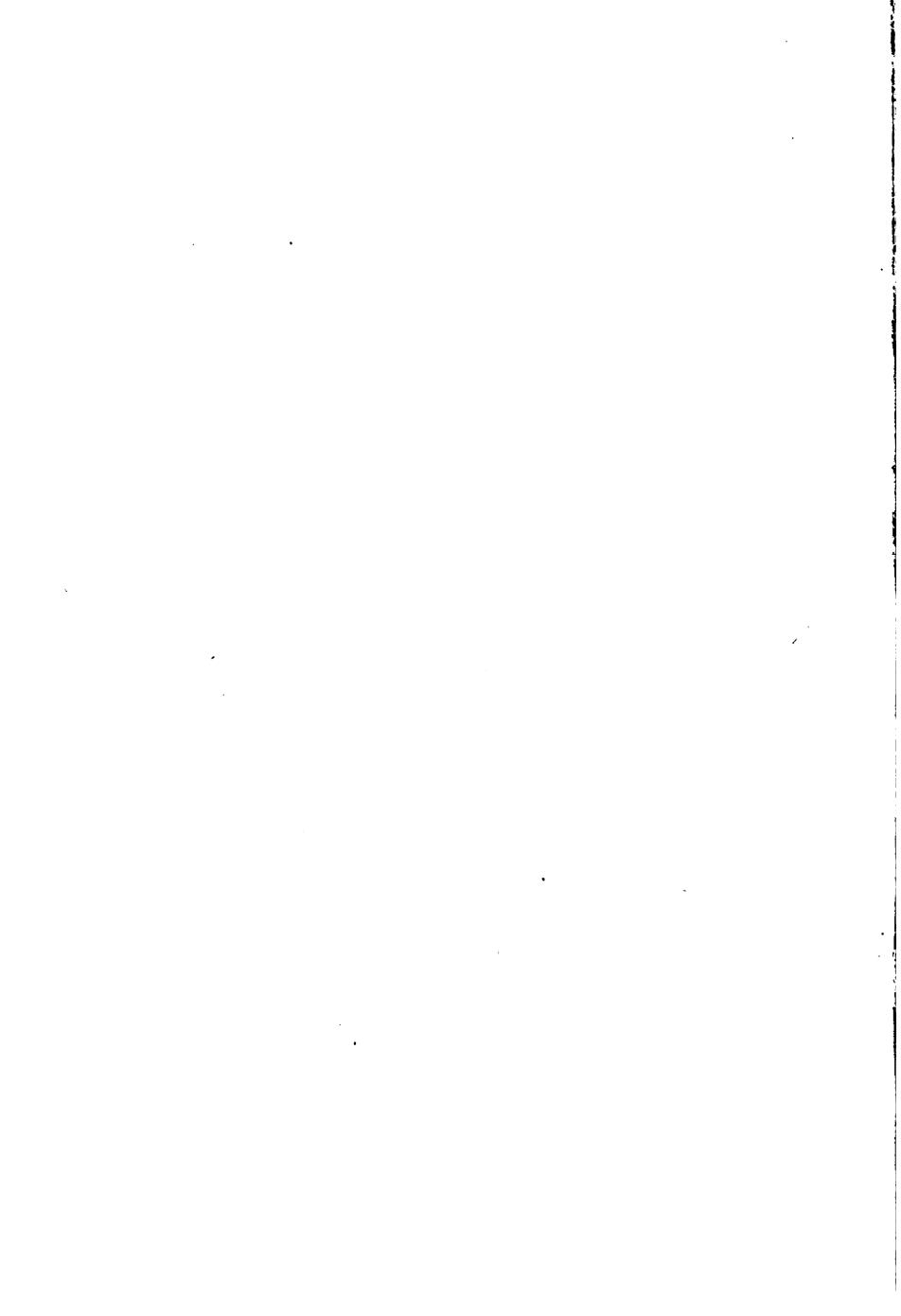
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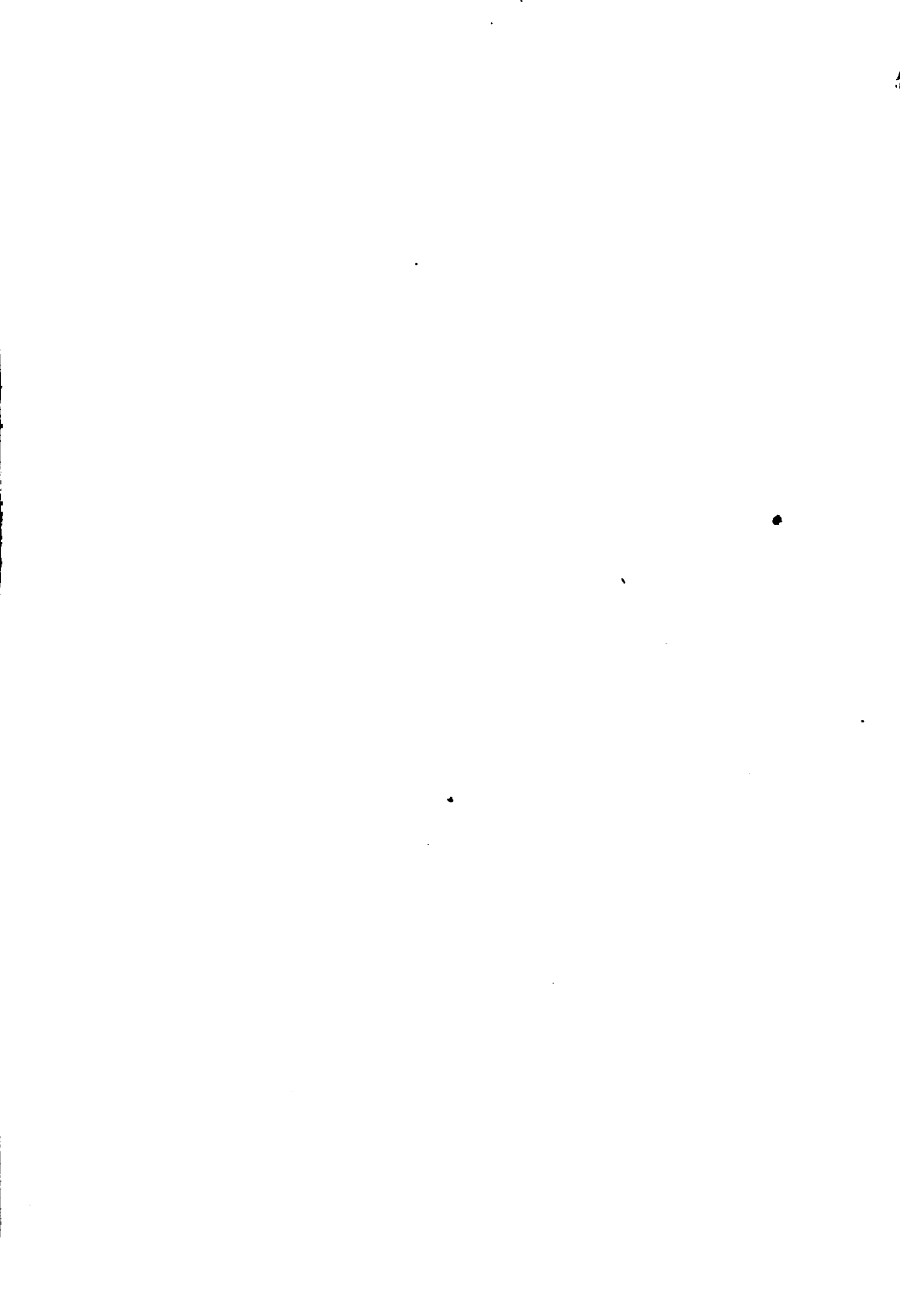


Vocational Edu. Div.









**HOW TO CHOOSE AND
GET A BETTER JOB**





HOW TO CHOOSE AND GET A BETTER JOB

by

EDWARD JONES KILDUFF

Chairman, Committee on Studies and Professor of Business English, New York University School of Commerce, Accounts and Finance; Sometime Assistant Manager, Personnel Division, U. S. Gas Defense Plant. Author of *The Stenographer's Manual*, *The Private Secretary* and co-author of *The Handbook of Business English*.

Introduction by

MICHAEL FRIEDSAM

President, B. Altman & Co.



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HOW TO CHOOSE AND GET A BETTER JOB

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DEDICATED
TO MY EVENING STUDENTS
at New York University, School of Commerce, Ac-
counts and Finance, whose ambition to succeed in
business has ever been a source of inspiration to me.

*"The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they while their companions slept
Were toiling upward in the night."—Longfellow*

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PREFACE

DURING the past nine years or so, a number of the students attending New York University School of Commerce, Accounts and Finance have come to me for assistance in selecting the courses of study they should pursue. Before it was possible to give them intelligent information, it was first necessary for me to talk with them about their future intentions. Had they already decided on the kind of business they intended to specialize in? If so, why had they so decided? Did they feel that they should like such work? Had they analyzed themselves to ascertain that they possessed the essential qualifications for that type of work? It was important that these and other similar questions be asked and answered before sound advice could be given them on the courses of study they should follow.

Although it was only natural to find that comparatively few of the younger students had definitely decided on their future occupation, it was surprising to learn that many of the more mature men (ranging in age from 22 to 35), who

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attended the evening sessions, had not yet fully made up their minds concerning which branch of business they were to make their permanent occupation—and this despite the fact that most of them had already had years of business experience. In both instances, the futility of attempting to map out for them a specialized course of study was evident. What was the use of helping a man to select courses in advertising, for instance, when he had not yet made up his mind that he wanted to make it his life's work?

My efforts to be of some assistance in helping men to decide on the branch of business work that they were best fitted for naturally led me into a study of vocational guidance and its allied subjects—of how one should determine what his life's work should be, of how to prepare oneself for it, of how to get into it, and of how to get ahead in it. The results of my observations I am now presenting in this book, with the hope that they may be of help to men and women who are considering entering one of the many branches of business or who are already in business.

A comparatively large proportion of the space of this volume is given over to a discussion of how to write an effective letter of application, for from experience I have learned that this matter usually causes considerable trouble. Cer-

PREFACE

tainly, every school that develops in men or women some specialized ability should also instruct those men or women in how to sell that ability.

I wish to acknowledge my deep indebtedness to Prof. George B. Hotchkiss, head of the Department of Advertising and Marketing of New York University, who so kindly read the manuscript and made many valuable suggestions.

E. J. KILDUFF.

NEW YORK CITY,
June 1, 1921.



INTRODUCTION

By MICHAEL FRIEDSAM

President of B. Altman & Co.

THE most beautiful monument to Labor ever erected by the hand of man is the bell tower of Giotto in Florence. In its panels the immortal artist has sculptured for all time his sermon on Industry. There never has been another so perfect a tribute to Labor, and there probably never will be.

It may seem that Giotto and his bell tower have nothing in common with Professor Kilduff and his book. As a matter of fact, they are strikingly related. Giotto had, and Professor Kilduff obviously possesses, the substance of the old Greek philosophy—Know Thyself. They both preach with Labor as their text—the one in carved stone, the other in written words.

Giotto knew himself, his desires, his possibilities, back in the days when as a boy he scratched on stone a caricature of his father's sheep. All during his life he labored hard, perseveringly, consistently, until at its end he

INTRODUCTION

had revolutionized the art of painting, and left ensculptured on his tower an enduring testimony to that virtue which he himself so well exemplified—Work.

A great part of Professor Kilduff's book is devoted to impressing upon the reader the value, indeed the necessity, of knowing oneself, of knowing one's own inclinations, of knowing how one may best earn a livelihood and serve one's fellow-men in the earning. He quotes in one chapter from Carlyle, "Blessed is he who has found his work"; in other words, blessed is he who has found himself. And then underlying the whole book, predominant in all the quotations which he gives from prominent men is the theme of Labor. There is but one road to permanent success, there is but one formula for overcoming the obstacles that may lie in that road—hard work.

If this book of Professor Kilduff's prompts some young people seeking positions to think before they act, its writing will have been warranted. If, reading deeper, others sense in it a sermon on labor, as I do, and profit by it, then high and unusual should be its praise. If in a few cases it should do what books rarely do, stimulate the readers to study themselves, to know themselves and to labor accordingly, then indeed it will merit the praise, not solely

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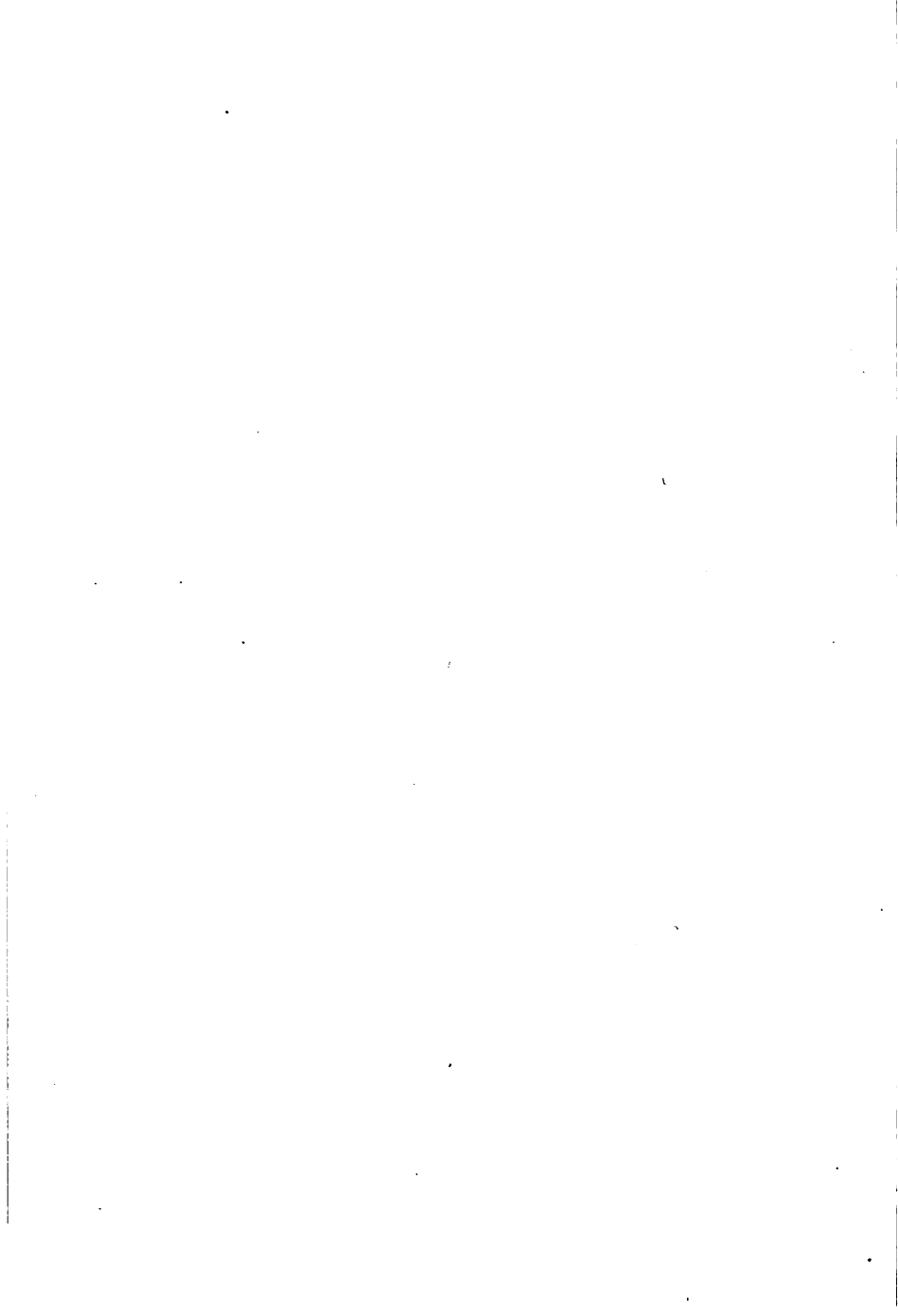
of those whom directly it benefits, but also of our entire business world.

It seems to me that Industry is suffering to-day from lack of sincerity. Workmen, employers and employees alike, perform their tasks too superficially. Tasks are accomplished without sufficient regard for the quality displayed in the accomplishment. The old sincerity and striving for perfection in work, whether it be in painting a picture or painting a house, or running a business, is missing. If the time comes that this quality becomes again general, many of the problems of industry will no longer exist.

Let young people in industry bear this in mind: If they put their hearts in their tasks, work honestly and definitely to accomplish something worth while, be patient and persist, an ample harvest of success must inevitably be theirs. And let them remember the advice of Cassius to Brutus—

*"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings."*

**HOW TO CHOOSE AND
GET A BETTER JOB**



HOW TO CHOOSE AND GET A BETTER JOB

I

PLANNING YOUR FUTURE

"Every man starting out in business will have to go over a hard road and find out its turnings for himself. But he need not go over his road in the dark if he can take with him the light of other men's experience."—JOHN WANAMAKER.

The Essentials for Success

THE mere fact that you are beginning to read this book indicates that you are desirous of getting ahead in the world and that, accordingly, you are trying to find out how to do it. The desire to succeed—whether brought about by ambition or the press of necessity—plus the determination to make a persistent and intelligent effort, are, in my opinion, two essentials for success. In all likelihood you already possess these two essentials in some degree. Yet to

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secure the best results, your ambition should be directed in the proper channels and your efforts should be made intelligently.

Undirected and misdirected ambition gets a man nowhere. But before one can direct his ambition he must first analyze himself to ascertain the kind of work he feels he would like to do and the kind for which he is best qualified—all of which demands an honest study of oneself and a careful consideration of the different kinds of jobs. And so, in the first part of this book, I have tried to present certain principles that may aid you in these matters.

Your efforts to advance must be made intelligently. You should know how other men succeeded and, if possible, why they succeeded. You should know how to acquire the qualifications necessary for certain jobs, how to go about getting into a vocation for which you are fitted, how to apply for a job, and how to forge ahead in it after you have obtained it. These matters are taken up in the latter part of the book.

To repeat, I feel that the man who is to succeed must first possess the essentials mentioned above. I feel that the man who has not analyzed himself and his purpose in the world, who has not realized that certain inexorable laws, particularly those demanding self-sacrifice and continuous industry, exist and must be obeyed, has

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not yet found himself and will continue to be a "drifter" until he does. The earlier he does these things, the sooner will he start on the upward road. And in this connection you may be interested to hear how one man found himself.

One Man's Rapid Rise

About seven years ago a young man called Andrews—of course that is not his real name—was employed as a clerk in the credit department of a large national bank in the Wall Street district of New York City.

Andrews was then about twenty-two years old. As far as all outward appearances were concerned, he was merely one of the thousands upon thousands of ordinary clerks that work in that great financial district. He had left school at the age of thirteen, he had no influential friends, and he had little or no money. Yet despite all these handicaps, he is to-day, at the age of twenty-nine, the first vice-president of a several-million-dollar banking corporation in New York City and is earning well over \$20,000 a year.

How did he do it? What methods did he use to get ahead? By what bit of good luck or intelligence was he able to raise himself out of the obscurity of a small clerical position to a place among New York's brilliant young bankers?

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These are questions that all of us are interested in, for from the answers we may learn something that will be of help to us in our attempts to get ahead in life. Because I happened to have made the acquaintance of Andrews when he was a clerk and have since observed his rapid rise, step by step, I think I can give you some information on these points. Of course the methods that he used to advance himself will probably not be the same that you can use, but they will start you thinking why you must plan your own future and how you should take steps to push yourself forward.

First of all, however, it should be said that the story of his rapid progress in business differs but little from the stories of how other men succeeded. It is the same story that is to-day being written of thousands of young men throughout the United States—it is the story that helps to explain why the few move on while the many stay behind.

On account of financial reasons Andrews was compelled to leave grammar school at the age of thirteen. He then spent about six months at a business school learning stenography and typewriting. Shortly thereafter he secured a position as stenographer in a business house, but was discharged within a week because his spelling was so poor. For two weeks, in deepest

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despondency, he walked the streets of New York looking for another position. In the evenings he studied a speller. As he tells it in his own words, "This experience so early in my life made me determine to put forth my best efforts in any job that I should ever hold. It made me afraid to lose a position."

His next job was that of stenographer in a law office, where he remained for about three years. "Here," he says, "everybody about me was studying law. I became fascinated with the idea of becoming a great lawyer and decided to study also. But I found that before I could take my bar examinations I should have to have the equivalent of a full four years' high-school course—and so I began to study at night. Within three years I had completed the work and had passed the high-school examinations given by the State of New York, and was now ready to begin my study of law. The salary I was getting was so small, however, that I was forced to seek a better-paying job. I went to one of the partners of the firm and told him about my circumstances. He agreed that it would be wise for me to make a change and very kindly recommended me for a position as secretary to the president of a bank.

"I got this job, but was fired after six months or so because I did not seem to be able to get

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along well with my employer. I went back to the law office and asked for my old job back again, but the partner who had helped me refused, and scolded me for not settling down. Again I was compelled to look for a job. After a short interval I was fortunate in landing a position as stenographer in the credit department of the — National Bank. Within a year I was made a credit investigator.

"I was now about nineteen years of age and I think it was at this time that I first seriously began to consider what I was going to make of myself. I realized that I was only one of the numberless clerks that do the detail and routine work in the large organizations of the kind in which I was employed. It seemed almost hopeless to try to get ahead, for I lacked influential friends, social connections, education, and money—things that do help a man to rise in the banking field.

"After considering the matter carefully, I decided that my only chance lay in developing my ability to such a point that I would *compel* recognition. And so I resolved to improve myself every day. I honestly believe that I owe whatever success I have made to that resolution. Not only did I do my work the best I could, but I studied how I could improve on it. I saw the other men in my department

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leaving for home at five o'clock, but I stayed on until six or seven. I liked the work and I wanted to get ahead. I kept this up for five years without becoming discouraged because I was not advanced in rank.

"Then suddenly the manager of the credit department was promoted and I was given his job. My first real step upward had been accomplished. At the age of twenty-four I was the credit manager of one of the large banks. I was a somebody in the banking field.

"But I didn't stop there. I continued to work hard and was usually the last man to leave at night."

As he spoke these words, he smiled and said to me: "I shall feel sorry for you if you state that fact in your book, for some of your readers are expecting to hear of a new way to gain success. But if there is anything that will take the place of hard work I don't know it.

"I kept thinking about and studying banking. Then one day I got an idea about an altogether new kind of banking service. At first it was only an idea, but the more I thought of it the more I saw how practicable it was. Instead of going off half-cocked and telling it to the president of the bank, I took time to work it out in detail and then wrote it all down in the form of a report. I carried this to him

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and asked him to take it home and read it over Sunday.

"On Monday he called me into his office, asked me to clear up certain points about my plan, and then told me he thought the idea was feasible. After a number of conferences, for these things are not accomplished in a day, I was requested to arrange the plans for the new corporation—for this organization that you see about you now.

"Then the Great War came. I enlisted in the navy, and was away for more than a year. When I returned, I went ahead on our old plans. When everything was ready we incorporated, and I was appointed manager with the title of vice-president. That's all there is to my story except that I am still planning how to get ahead farther."

Is It Luck—or What?

The plain, matter-of-fact story of Andrews' success that you have just read is similar to the stories told of the rise of other men—the same heavy handicaps in youth, the same struggle to get ahead,—and finally the achievement of their purposes. Was it luck in his case—or what? Are we to believe that men like Schwab, Carnegie, Hill, Woolworth, and many others, succeeded because of luck or of something else?

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Read the biographies or autobiographies of these men and you will learn how little their successes were due to luck and how much to a steadfast desire to get ahead and a persistent and intelligent effort to do so. Read again what Andrews said: "I decided that my only chance lay in developing my ability to such a point that I would *compel* recognition." His rise began at that moment. And I believe that *in the life of every successful man there must have come a time when he first realized that if he was to make a success he would have to do it himself—when he first began seriously to plan to get ahead.*

Why Planning Is Necessary

And so with you. You have probably already realized that you, and you alone, are to be responsible for your success; now you must plan intelligently how you are to get ahead. Perhaps the most important question in your whole life is, "How shall I get ahead?" It is this question which, if you are to make a success of your life, you must find the answer to—the correct answer. Not only must you answer it when you are just entering business, but you must be finding new answers to it before each new step forward. For example, after you have gone ahead a little ways in business you

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may come to a fork in the road and find that you will have to make a decision as to whether you should strive for this better job or for that one. And then, having made up your mind concerning the direction you are to take, you will have to decide on how you will go about getting that job. In any case, before you take a definite step you will have to do some planning.

Alfred C. Bedford, who worked his way from office boy to the presidency of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, once said in an interview reported by B. C. Forbes, editor of *Forbes' Magazine*:

Try to plan out your life, to map out a course; consider and calculate the steps necessary to carry you toward your goal; go forward step by step—and don't get your sequences mixed. Do one thing at a time. If your job at the moment is to keep books, master bookkeeping thoroughly and study the fundamentals of accountancy—don't merely keep your books mechanically. From accountancy go on to study finance, and this will help to open other doors. Or, if you start in a manufacturing department, first master that department and then learn all there is to be learned about other departments. Thus will you become familiar with the whole process of manufacture.

Your next step would be to learn the outlets and the uses for your manufacture—the market for your product. By studying what and how much your market will take or will not take you become a capable merchandise man. This double knowledge of manufacturing and merchandising qualifies you to fill an executive position and opens

PLANNING YOUR FUTURE

the way to rise to the very top, whereas the fellow who was content to jog along in the rut in one department will still be about where he began.

Before any important step is taken, before any decision is made, the results of which are vital, it is strongly advisable to do a certain amount of thinking or planning. Before the commander-in-chief moves his armies on the battlefield he first decides definitely what he wishes to accomplish and whether the chances of accomplishing it are in his favor. Having decided on these points, he next plans out carefully and with attention to each detail just how he is to go about achieving his objective. Nothing is left to chance; no action is taken blindly. Not until he and his general staff have planned out everything to the last particular and prepared for all contingencies that they can foresee—not until then are the orders issued and the troops moved. It is too serious a matter not to be exceedingly careful about.

Using Your Intelligence to Succeed

And you should be just as careful in planning your future. Your success in business, with everything that success in that field implies, such as the money that will mean the comforts and pleasures of life for you and your family, the respect of your friends, acquaintances, and

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community, the prestige and honor that success brings, and the inward satisfaction that you have made yourself a success—to repeat, your success is as vital to you personally as victory in battle is to a nation. And because your success means so much to you, you should plan out how you are going to get it just as carefully as do the commander-in-chief and his general staff. You must first try to determine in what kind of business you have the best chance to make a success; you must plan, if you are not already in that field, *how you are going about getting into it, and then you must constantly use your intelligence to get ahead in it.*

Planning must be done if the best results are to be secured and if mistakes are to be avoided. The architect drafts the plans of a building before work is begun on the building; the sales manager investigates and plans out how the new product of his factory is to be sold before he places it on the market; and the factory manager plans the arrangement of the machines in his new factory before those machines are installed. All this preliminary thinking is done so that the work when finished may be as nearly perfect as possible and so that no costly mistakes may be made.

It is only too true that some buildings have been constructed without plans, that some new

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articles have been marketed without a definite program having been laid out in advance—and it is true that successes have been made in business by men who gave little thought to how they should get ahead. But in the great majority of cases successful achievement has been secured with the help of planning. The man who has no plans has no goal to strive for. Or, if he has a goal, he does not know how he is going about reaching it. As for you, take this surer course: *Decide on what you are trying to reach, plan out as definitely as you can how you are going about reaching it, and then study and work to get ahead.* By doing so your success will be more complete, you will avoid making costly blunders (such as spending, say, three or four years in a branch of business that you dislike and in which you do not intend to stay), and you will arrive at your goal earlier in life than otherwise, because you will come by a more direct route.

Choosing an Occupation

The first step to take is to try to choose the branch of business in which you will have the best opportunity to succeed. If you are about to enter business, you must, naturally, give this matter quite a bit of consideration. If you are already in business you must still decide

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whether you are in the right branch or whether it might not be better to change to a different one.

You may have heard it said many a time that a man should find out early in life what he wants to do, and then stick to it. Lucky is the man who is able to follow out that bit of advice. Fortunate indeed is he who early in life knows exactly what he wants to do and is able to do it.

So far as my own experience with hundreds of men and women at New York University School of Commerce, Accounts, and Finance has shown me, many do not know, at twenty-two, twenty-five, or even thirty years of age, exactly what kind of occupation they want to make their permanent vocation. And I also believe that unless you happen to be one of the few who have a strong inclination to become accountants, lawyers, advertising-copy writers, store managers, or to enter a similarly specific profession or vocation, you should not make up your mind too soon. One cannot force the decision, except at the possibility of making a mistake. It is wiser to take time to find yourself. In fact, I feel that altogether too much emphasis is placed on the statement that to be successful one must early in life decide on his occupation. It often happens that one has

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not yet had enough experience in life to decide such an important question. And how can one decide until he has had plenty of opportunity to look around and to consider several different branches of business?

The statements given just above should not, however, be construed to mean that one who at the present moment is unable to decide should have no plan. He should have at least a general plan for advancing himself, no matter what his present job may be. This plan can be altered from time to time as conditions change.

Finding What You Want to Do

Men who find it difficult to make a decision concerning the occupation in which they intend to advance themselves should not, therefore, become discouraged and perhaps say to themselves: "I shall never succeed. I don't seem to have a very strong desire to do any one particular thing." To such men as have not yet made up their minds, it should be said that such a condition is not uncommon; on the contrary, it is the usual thing in men until they are, say, thirty years of age.

If you reflect a moment, you will recall that many successful business men of this decade, and past decades, made numerous and radical

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changes in their occupations before they finally found themselves. For example, Frank E. Vanderlip, the former president of the National City Bank of New York, one of the greatest banks in the world, was for years a foreman in a machine shop at Aurora, Illinois; then a newspaper reporter in Chicago, Illinois; next a secretary in Washington, D. C.; and so on up to the top.

Andrew Carnegie started life as a bobbin boy at one dollar and twenty cents a week. Later he became a telegraph messenger boy; then a telegraph operator. His next employment was with the Pennsylvania Railroad as telegraph operator and assistant to Thomas A. Scott, superintendent of the Pittsburgh Division, at thirty-five dollars a month. Six years later he succeeded Mr. Scott as superintendent of the same division. When the Civil War broke out in 1861 he was appointed assistant in charge of the military railways and telegraphs of the government. In 1865, after twelve years of service, he resigned from the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and gave all his energies to the manufacturing of rails, locomotives, and steel for bridges.

George Eastman, the multi-millionaire head of the Eastman Kodak Company, started work at the age of thirteen as a three-dollar-a-week

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clerk in an insurance office. He next became a bookkeeper in a savings bank at a thousand dollars a year, in which position he remained until he was twenty-six years old. Then he went into business for himself on the small capital he had saved.

James A. Farrel, president of the United States Steel Corporation, began his business life as a laborer in a wire mill at New Haven, Connecticut. He next became a mechanic, then a wire drawer, and then a foreman. Seeing the great opportunities in the field of selling, he studied this subject and finally persuaded his company to put him on the road as a salesman. His success in this field brought him to the attention of the officials of the United States Steel Corporation. From that time on his rise was rapid.

A few years ago a certain young man was graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he had specialized in mechanical engineering. After his graduation he secured a job in the engineering department of a small iron foundry. His specialized technical training would seem to make a change to a wholly different kind of work quite difficult. Yet to-day he is the successful sales manager of a nationally known manufacturer of chocolate. The various steps leading to this apparently

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abrupt change of vocation were as follows: After a year or two of experience in a foundry, he found that he did not care much for that kind of work. In his search for a chance to make a change, he came upon a "Help Wanted" advertisement in a trade journal for a man with technical training to work in the advertising department of a manufacturer of a well-known technical product. By means of his letter of application, he secured an interview and later the position. After a year or two of this work he enlisted in the army and fought in the Great War. Upon his return to the United States he was offered his old position, but he decided that he wanted to secure a position in which he could learn more about advertising and selling. Again, by means of a letter of application, he secured an interview and a job with a large advertising agency where he wrote advertisements on technical products. After a year he decided that his bent was more toward personal selling than toward advertising. So he decided to look for a position in the selling field. Through inquiry he learned that a manufacturer of chocolate desired to secure the services of a city sales manager. He applied for the position and got it. After that his promotion was rapid, until to-day he is the sales manager of the company. He has now

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found what he likes to do and he intends to stay in that field.

These few instances tend to show that no man should become discouraged because he has not yet found himself. At the same time, however, merely because he is unable to fix upon a vocation, he should not cease his efforts to improve his general qualities. Shut off for the time being from making plans to advance himself in a specialized vocation, he should turn his attention to increasing his knowledge of such general and valuable business subjects as business correspondence, business law, economics, finance, advertising, selling, office management, and bookkeeping, and to the development of such personal qualities as initiative, agreeable personality, common sense, and accuracy. No matter into what branch of business he may later decide to go, a knowledge of such subjects, the possession of such qualities, and the maturity gained from his experience will be of considerable assistance to him.

Nor should he mark time in whatever job he is at present employed, while waiting to find himself. He should master his job, learning and earning as much as he can from it. Later, when he has made up his mind, he may be helped to get the right job through the strong recommendation of his present employer.

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How the Decision Is Made

We have now considered two classes of men: (1) those whose natural inclination toward a certain vocation has already answered the question for them; and (2) those who are not yet ready to make a decision. This latter class includes many men who are just about to enter business and who, because of lack of natural bent and of experience in business, do not know what they should do; and it also includes the men who are already in business but who have yet to go through a further "ripening stage" before they can finally make up their minds.

Let us next consider the class of men who are ready to decide on their vocations. The following instance comes to my mind: About a year ago last June a young man was graduated from a commercial high school in New York City, where he had studied such subjects as stenography and typewriting, bookkeeping, commercial law, and business English. Like most boys, he had not fully decided which specific calling he wanted to follow, except that he felt that he desired to take up some sort of business work.

Shortly after his graduation he began to write letters of application for various types of positions advertised and was finally successful

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in securing a position as bookkeeper in a small retail clothing store. He had been in this work for not more than six or seven months when he realized that his employer could not afford to pay much of a wage for the services of a bookkeeper. After some little consideration of the matter he saw that there were three possible decisions he could make: either he could stay in his present job with the intention of learning the retail clothing business, or he could change to a different kind of work, or he could secure a position that offered better opportunity for advancement in the field of bookkeeping.

After a careful analysis of his feelings he decided that he liked bookkeeping and accounting, and that even when he had studied bookkeeping in high school he had liked it better than any other subject. He felt that he should like to continue in this kind of work. Then he considered his qualifications; he realized that the highest marks he had secured at school had been in bookkeeping and commercial arithmetic; and that he did his bookkeeping work at the store with ease.

About this time he made the acquaintance of a young man who told him that he was working as a junior accountant with a firm of public accountants and that he was also studying accounting in the evening at one of the univer-

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sities. This interested him so much that he asked a number of questions about the opportunities in accounting, how to get into the field, how to enter the university, and so on. From the information that was given him, he appreciated the fact that bookkeeping was only the first step to entering a profitable profession—that of accountancy. Having now found out that he liked bookkeeping and accounting, that his qualifications apparently pointed to the fact that he would make a success in that field, and that the opportunities in the field were good, he decided to become a public accountant.

Let us take another case: A young man, aged twenty-two, was graduated from a well-known Eastern college. After graduation he came to New York City and secured a position as a salesman in a bond house. Two years passed in which he gained valuable experience in personal salesmanship and in selling by mail. At the end of this period he found that, although he did not dislike personal selling and had been, in fact, fairly successful, he had no strong liking for it. On the other hand, from talking to several of his classmates who were engaged in the advertising business, from reading books and articles on advertising, and from a little experience in helping his classmates write "copy,"

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he felt that he should like to go into advertising work and, in particular, to become a copy writer.

While still continuing his work as a city bond salesman he attended lectures on advertising held in the evenings at one of the universities. This course further inclined him to believe that advertising was the work he wanted to do.

From his talks with his classmates and with their acquaintances in the advertising business he soon saw that there were plenty of opportunities for good men in that field, that the salaries paid were attractive, and, best of all, the chances to get ahead fast were good, for this field is comparatively a new one.

He went over his qualifications and found that everything pointed in the desired direction: his four years of training in a college of arts furnished a good, sound background; he had always liked his English courses; he liked writing—in fact, he had written several stories for his college magazine; his two years of selling experience would be valuable, for advertising is a method of selling. He decided that he had the qualifications to make a good “copy man.”

Then he planned out how it would be possible for him to make the change from selling bonds to writing advertising copy. He decided to try to connect himself with a big advertising

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agency in preference to doing work in the advertising department of a business house, because he felt that he would get a broader training in the former place.

And then, having analyzed the situation as completely as he could, he made up his mind to go into the advertising business. He made his decision.

There are two questions that will help one to arrive at a decision, as follows:

1. Do you like the vocation you plan to get into permanently?
2. Have you the qualifications for this vocation?

A more complete discussion of these two questions will be found in the next chapter.

II

MAKING THE DECISION

"Too many men drift lazily into any job suited or unsuited for them, and, when they don't get along well, blame everybody and everything except themselves."

—THOMAS A. EDISON.

Why You Must Make It Yourself

MANY men rely too much upon the advice of others in this important matter of making a decision on the occupation they are to go into. Of course it is desirable that you do go to others to get their views on the subject, for often such information is of great value in helping you to make up your mind. But, after all, it is usually not wise to follow too closely the advice of another person, for he cannot tell as well as you yourself can what you like, and, if you have carefully analyzed yourself, he cannot know your qualifications as well as you do, both your strong and your weak points.

Choosing an occupation is of much more

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vital concern to you than to the one who may advise. And, since this is so, he may not take the same care in deciding for you that you must take. Moreover, being influenced by his own inclinations and desires, he is more than likely to select for you an occupation into which he himself would like to go and in which he sees opportunities for himself. No one has as much at stake in making the decision as you have—and, accordingly, no one will give the question as much consideration and careful study as you should. Make your own decision.

Make Sure that You Like the Work of Your Occupation

"Blessed is he that has found his work! Let him ask no other blessedness."—CARLYLE.

In all probability the most trustworthy guide to follow in choosing your occupation is your own likes and dislikes. Certainly it is true that if you dislike your work you will never advance far in it. You cannot possibly compete, other things being equal, with the man who is in the same work with you but who likes it immensely. He will devote not only his working hours, but also his out-of-working hours, in bettering his ability; whereas you, because

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you dislike the work, cannot take the same interest in it that he does. You are only too glad to stop all thought of your day's work the minute it is done. His work to him is a pleasure; to you it is just work. *True satisfaction and happiness in life come from working at the kind of work one likes best.*

Many men continue in an occupation that they do not care for, merely because the wages are good. But it is not good business for them to do so, except, of course, as a temporary matter. The chances of their getting very far are slim because of their lack of interest in their work. They are merely temporizing, for, eventually, if they are to get ahead, they will have to get out of that kind of work and into one in which they will take an interest because they like it—or they will have to overcome their dislike of their work. *The latter fact should not be overlooked.* For example, consider the following situation: A young man had just finished the second month of his experience as a salesman, selling candy to jobbers. On account of his natural timidity he had had a hard time of it meeting and talking to his prospects, with the result that he took a dislike to his work. He was undecided whether to continue as a salesman or to look for another kind of job. Fortunately he decided that he

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would first try to overcome his shyness, with the intention of leaving his work if he failed to overcome it. At the end of a month of self-training he found that he had succeeded in losing a great part of this diffidence and that he was now beginning to have a greater zest for his work. He later developed into a first-class salesman. In this case, he probably would have made a mistake if he had changed to another field before he had first tried to overcome his dislike for the work he was doing.

Here you may well ask, "If I am now in one kind of business for which I have no great liking, how can I tell whether I shall like any better another kind of business?" That, of course, is just the point. You must try to find out enough about several different branches of business so that you can tell what you do like. Read books that discuss the various fields of business, read trade papers, talk with your friends and acquaintances about their work—and try in other ways to find out about what the work of different branches of business is like.

The general likes and dislikes that you already have will help you to decide. You know, for example, that if you do not like mathematics, and were never good in it, you ought to keep away from the fields in which figuring is largely

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used, such as, for example, bookkeeping and accounting.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding, it is advisable for me to add that the mere fact that you once disliked mathematics is no sure test that you should not take up bookkeeping or accounting. Your dislike for mathematics may have been caused by the fact that you never received a good grounding in it. This defect made your later training in mathematics so difficult that you took a dislike to the subject. Such a dislike, however, may be removed by a careful study of the subject. You may then find that it is not so hard as it appeared before, and that, since it is now much easier for you, you have actually lost your distaste for it. It is usually the case that we dislike anything that is difficult or hard for us; and, conversely, anything that we dislike is hard for us to do well.

Benjamin Franklin, telling of how his father wanted to help him pick out a trade, said, "He therefore sometimes took me to walk with him and see joiners, bricklayers, turners, braziers, etc., at their work, that he might observe my inclination."

The following facts now appear: (1) If you are already engaged in a business that you dislike, you should first try to overcome the cause of your dislike; (2) before going into

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a new field of work you should decide as best you can whether you will like it. This latter decision may be reached by investigating and learning as much as you can about the type of work of that field, and by determining whether the new vocation is a kind of work that, judging from past experience in school and in business, you already know you like. Under no condition, however, should you choose as a *permanent* vocation a type of work which you dislike.

Have You the Qualifications to Succeed in the Occupation?

The mere liking to do a certain kind of work is not enough to enable you to choose the right occupation, for, in addition, you should possess the essential qualifications demanded by the occupation. A clerk in a law office may have a very strong liking for law, he may have a keen desire to become a lawyer, but because of the fact that he has a pronounced defect in his speech it would hardly be advisable for him to attempt to become a trial lawyer—at least not until he had removed such a handicap.

Consider the following illustration also: A man is employed as the assistant to the sales manager of a large corporation. His work is chiefly of a routine nature, such as checking orders, compiling statistics on orders, and keep-

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ing in touch with competitors' prices. From his contact with his chief he develops a liking for the work performed by the sales manager. He decides that he will aim to make salesmanship his occupation. It happens, however, although he does not suspect it, that he is altogether lacking in initiative; he is unable to originate new selling ideas and plans. Before he could attain much of a success as a sales manager he must first possess that qualification—initiative.

In order to save yourself from making a serious mistake, therefore, you should carefully analyze the occupation you are considering entering, to ascertain exactly what the essential qualifications for that occupation are; and then you should even more carefully analyze yourself to find out whether you have those qualifications. If you haven't them, you should either look around for a different occupation, the qualifications for which you do possess, or you should set out to secure the necessary qualifications.

Considering the Opportunities in the Various Fields

It very often happens that a man has no particularly strong inclination to make any one of several branches of an occupation his permanent vocation. He may like in a general

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way, for example, work of a financial nature and, upon analysis, he may find that he has the general qualifications for that field. In such a case, he should first of all chart out the field so that he may ascertain whether or not he can narrow his choice, and also that he may consider the opportunities in each subdivision. This he may do as follows:

1. Banking:

1. National banks.
2. Savings banks
3. Trust companies.
4. Private banks.

2. Financial brokerage:

1. Stock brokerage.
2. Bond brokerage.

3. Public finance:

1. Public utility companies.
2. Underwriting companies.

4. Private finance:

1. Treasurer's office of corporation or company.
- Etc.

In order to assist himself further, he may even subdivide each main branch of his field, as is done with the branch shown below:

Trust company:

1. Banking department:

- (a) Teller's work.
- (b) Cashier's work.
- (c) Credit investigation.
- Etc.

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2. New business department:
 - (a) General publicity and advertising.
 - (b) Soliciting new accounts.Etc.
3. Trust department:
 - (a) Administering trusts and estates.Etc.
4. Foreign exchange department:
Etc.

Such subdivision may give him a better view of the field than he had before and he may now be able to make a choice. If, however, he is still unable to decide, a careful survey of the opportunities in each branch may help to decide for him.

If you find that you have a general liking for the work of a main division of business, and if, after consideration, you find that no one branch or subdivision of the field attracts you more strongly than any other branch, you should now consider the opportunities that exist in each branch and then choose the branch which offers the best opportunities. By "opportunities" is meant the following:

1. Chances for advancement.
2. Chances for securing valuable training and experience.
3. Chances for obtaining a good salary.

Considering the Chances for Advancement

It is only too true that many men fail to give any consideration whatsoever to the above-men-

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tioned three points before they enter the new job. And because they were negligent and failed to look ahead they later suffer the consequences. One man finds that he has spent four years of his business life with a concern that was losing ground even before he entered it and that because it was not making much money it could not afford to pay much to its employees. It was not expanding, and, therefore, there was little chance of advancement for its workers. This man finally realized these facts rather late; whereas, if he had taken pains he might easily have learned of the condition of the concern before he took the job.

In another instance a man took a position with a small manufacturing corporation. After three years of hard work, with but little advancement, he discovered that this corporation was what is termed "a family affair"; that is, the great majority of its stock was owned or controlled by two families. All the important positions were held by members of these families and, accordingly, there was practically no chance for him to advance very far.

To be sure, many unavoidable mistakes are made in these matters, but in the two instances related above, both men could have learned the actual state of affairs if they had taken

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the trouble, for the information was generally known in the trade.

At the same time, however, even in unprogressive concerns and in "family affair" organizations, opportunities often exist if one can only see them. *Too many men expect the job to make them; whereas they should make the job.* Too often do these same employees say to themselves: "This is a 'blind alley' job. I am not getting anywhere in it." Before coming to any such conclusion, it is wise to make sure that you yourself are not at fault. If you tried, perhaps you could put some life into the unprogressive concern; perhaps you could make yourself so valuable to the "family affair" organization that they would have to make a place for you. But you must find the opportunities yourself.

If, then, you are considering going permanently into a certain occupation, perhaps the most important question to consider is, "What are my chances of advancement in that occupation?" Of course, if you intend to remain in that field for only a short time, such points as salary and the chance to secure valuable experience will naturally be placed first.

The wise business man is always trying to find what the future holds. The retail clothier buys his fall clothing in the spring and, in

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making up his order, tries to determine what the demand will be in the fall. If prices are high, he buys less, for fear that the higher prices will prevent many customers from buying. The manufacturer of building hardware tries to forecast the demand so that he may place his order for raw materials. In almost all fields it is necessary to look and plan ahead. And so with you. You must look ahead to ascertain what position you may be holding five or ten years from now in the company you are thinking of going with.

The chances of advancement are usually better with a concern that is rapidly expanding, because, as it expands, more employees are needed and the older and more efficient ones are pushed ahead. New concerns usually offer better chances of promotion than do old and well-established concerns, although there is the danger that the new concern may not last long. Progressive concerns offer greater opportunities of rapid advancement than do conservative concerns. The man who selects a live, pushing, and successful organization, and who is able to secure a position with it, is carried right along with the tide unless he is hopelessly inefficient. Information regarding the character of a company—whether old-fashioned, progressive, etc.—can usually be secured by talking with men

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already in the field. They often know which concerns are pushing ahead, which are falling behind.

Be as particular in choosing your employer for the opportunity of advancement you expect to make for yourself with him, as he is in choosing you for the ability and qualifications you can offer him. Look after your interests in picking an employer as he looks after his interests in picking you.

The Chances for Securing Valuable Experience and Training

The second consideration you should have in mind in deciding on which job to go after is the chances offered by that job for securing valuable experience and training. You know that in business you are usually paid according to your ability—and your ability depends to a large extent upon your past experience and the training you have received. Hence, in choosing a job, try to select one which will give you good experience—an experience which you can later “cash in” on. For example: a man who is planning to become an advertising copy writer may find it advisable to get some actual experience as a personal salesman, for this experience will be very valuable to him later.

Another man may decide that he wants to

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become a credit manager. What could help him more to realize his ambition than the experience and training he can get in the credit department of a large company, the head of which department has a big reputation for his work? Later, when he is trying to secure the position of credit manager of a smaller company, the fact that he has had four or five years of experience under such a manager will be a valuable asset to him.

A man who is just entering business should try as hard as possible to get a job with a first-class company. He is then in the formative period of his business life, and the training he will receive should give him good business habits.

In choosing a position to go after, then, give consideration to the opportunities it offers in the matter of advancement and training. Don't pay too much attention to the salary question—at least do not place salary above these two points.

The Chances for Obtaining a Good Salary

The third point to consider is the question of your chances to obtain a good salary. This question involves the matter of the salary offered at the beginning and also the matter of the salary you can expect later on.

Many men have made the mistake of allow-

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ing the salary offered at the beginning to affect their choice. And here again the farsighted man, the man who "uses his head," pauses to look ahead a bit. He says to himself, "The salary offered is tempting, but what shall I be getting five years from now?" And such a question should be carefully considered.

As a general rule, positions that offer good opportunities have a lower beginning salary than positions which offer small opportunities. To tempt men to take the latter positions, a larger salary must be offered; or, what is perhaps more technically correct, to secure workers for such jobs a higher beginning salary must be offered. Positions that possess obvious opportunities attract many applicants because good men are usually willing to sacrifice a part of their present income so that they may have a chance later to make a much larger income than they could expect to make in another business. Such men can be secured for a salary lower than that paid in other businesses.

With reference to this point, it is interesting to note the statement made in the *American Magazine* by Harvey D. Gibson, who at the age of only thirty-four became president of the Liberty National Bank of New York City, and who is now president of the New York Trust Company:

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The average man entering the service of a large corporation at eighteen or twenty (or a little later than that if he has been at college) may expect during the first two or three years to earn a bare living. If he earns much more than a bare living he is likely to be in a blind-alley position, for which very little preparation is required. It is a bad sign for a job to pay too much at the beginning. The beginners, as students of business, as apprentices, are not, in terms of service rendered, worth very much. Years ago, in fact, they would have had to serve for nothing, or in some cases to have paid the employer to take them in. The present rates of pay are high; they will probably decline rather than increase during the next few years—although as expressed in purchasing power they will not be lower. Taking to-day's pay, a young man, after five years of work, ought to be earning between \$2,500 and \$3,000 a year. After ten years he should be earning around \$5,000 a year; and about that time opportunities will ordinarily begin to present themselves.

In this connection I am reminded of two brothers, aged twenty and twenty-two, respectively, who, after a short experience in business, decided to make a change in their jobs. The older brother secured a position as a waiter, in which position his wages and tips averaged him about thirty dollars a week. He offered to get for the younger brother a job as a waiter in the same restaurant, but the younger brother fortunately decided that there was not much of a future there; that he could not learn much, and that the experience would not be of much assistance to him later in life. He finally decided to take a position as a "runner" in a

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brokerage office, the pay for which was only five dollars a week. In fact, of the various jobs that he might take, the job that he did take offered the lowest salary. But he saw opportunities for advancement in such a field. He saw that he would be learning an important business and that the experience and training he would receive would be of value to him later.

To-day, at the end of four years, the older brother is still just a waiter, still averages about thirty dollars a week, and sees no future before him. The younger brother is now a bond salesman and is making approximately three thousand dollars a year, or about fifty-six dollars a week. But, best of all, his future prospects are bright, for from his daily experience and training he is developing rapidly into a better salesman.

Of course this story does not prove that the older brother would have been just as successful as the younger brother if he, too, had become a "runner," but in all probability he would be better off as respects his future than he is to-day if he had selected a job that offered opportunities for advancement, or, what is even more to the point, if he had pushed himself ahead in the restaurant business as his brother had done in the brokerage business.

And so with you. Don't take a job just

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because you can make more money from it *now!* Look ahead a bit. Find out what salary a man can expect after, say, five years in that occupation you are thinking about entering. *Take the job that offers you the opportunity to make a good salary in the future.* Success in business isn't a question of whether you are making more money than the next man *now*, but whether in five, ten, or fifteen years from now you will be making more. To make a success in business you must build for the future—not for the present." If it appears that there are no opportunities in your present job, don't be too sure that they aren't there. Look for them. Before Woolworth showed that it could be done, nobody thought that a man could make millions of dollars running a five-and-ten-cent-store business.

III

WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES INTERFERE

"I did not have to overcome any handicap of inherited wealth, which usually takes all ambition of achievement out of a young man."—F. W. WOOLWORTH.

"If we did not have to struggle we would be weaklings. If we struggle manfully and push on, everything will work out right and we will be successful."

—JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER.

It Can Be Done

IT is sometimes easier for one to determine what occupation one wants to follow than it is to see one's way clear to following it. Biography is full of examples of fathers who forced their sons to take up occupations distasteful to them and of how these sons finally got into the work that they themselves wanted to do.

History, too, is full of stories of men who won their way over poverty, lack of education, and other adverse circumstances, to success in their chosen fields of activity. Such stories are well known as those of Demosthenes, who, by practicing with pebbles in his mouth, overcame a defect in his speech and rose to become

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one of the greatest of the Athenian orators; and of Abraham Lincoln, who literally picked up an education by reading and studying a few books in the flickering light of a fire.

But few people realize that many of the most successful of present-day business men had just as humble a beginning as Lincoln, and just as hard obstacles to overcome. Frank W. Woolworth, the founder and head of the great Woolworth chain of five-and-ten-cent stores, was once a dry-goods clerk at Watertown, New York; Charles M. Schwab, former head of the United States Steel Corporation, and now chairman of the board of directors of the immense Bethlehem Steel Corporation, was once a stake driver at a dollar a day; H. P. Davison, one of the partners of J. P. Morgan & Co., began life as an errand boy in a bank; Charles H. Sabin, the president of the great Guaranty Trust Company of New York, is an ex-farm boy; almost without exception, the heads of the leading railroads began at the bottom as brakemen, telegraphers, and in similar positions. Indeed, the truth is that five of every six really big business executive positions in the United States are now filled by men who started in humble circumstances and who had to make their own way in life.

No man, therefore, should feel that such

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circumstances as poverty, lack of education, and residence in a small town are too great handicaps to be overcome. In fact, to be facetious for a moment, it would almost appear that these circumstances were necessary for a brilliant success in business. Most of the heads of our biggest business enterprises were once poor, many of them are not college-trained men, and the great majority of them came from small towns.

Any man who feels discouraged over his prospects should read the biographies, autobiographies, and stories of the men who have made tremendous successes in business. (Several excellent biographies are listed on page 212.) By such reading he will learn that greater obstacles in one case or the other confronted them than do him. And all these obstacles were overcome. To be perfectly frank, little is said about the men who failed because they were unable to overcome their handicaps; but it is certainly true that men have surmounted the most discouraging of circumstances and have shown that it can be done.

Not all of us can be Carnegies, Woolworths, Schwabs, or Vanderlips—for these men possessed capacities and intelligences far above those that most of us possess or ever shall possess. But their overcoming of the obstacles

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that confronted them helps to show us that *unfavorable circumstances need not be allowed to stand between us and the successes which are within our capacities and intelligences to secure.* They overcame theirs, and we can overcome ours—if we really try hard enough to do so.

After all, success, even in business, is not and should not be measured by the yardstick of the dollar. Nor is it to be estimated by the prominence that a man occupies in business. Rather is it to be measured by the distance a man has risen in life, considering the obstacles he has had to contend with and the material (qualifications, intelligence, capacity, etc.) he had to work with. *The real test of your success will be, "Have you made the most of yourself?"*

The Obstacles to Success

Two of the most common and *real* obstacles of life that must be overcome by the ambitious man if he is to be successful are as follows:

1. Lack of health.
2. Lack of education or training.

Two of the most common and *apparently real* obstacles are as follows:

1. Poverty.
2. Residence in a small town.

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Since most of us have to overcome one or more of these obstacles, it is advisable for us to consider them carefully, so that we may see how they can be surmounted.

Lack of Health

"Hardly less than mental ability are bodily health and vigor necessary to success. Talents alone, however fine, will not insure success."

—WILLIAM MATTHEWS.

If you already have had any experience in looking for a job, you know that one of the first things a prospective employer asks is, "What can you do?" or, "What training or experience have you had?" From such occurrences you have learned that experience and training in a field of business are essentials to your progress in that field. But because no employer has asked you whether you are healthy, you probably have not considered that good health is important to your success. Or since, perhaps, you are young, you may say, "I already have health—and lack of health cannot, therefore, be an obstacle in my path." But the question is not so much whether you possess health now; rather is it, "What are you doing to keep it if you have it?"

So much has been written about the value

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of good health in business that the subject may seem to you to be worn threadbare. The cry of "Wolf!" has been dinned in your ears so many times that it may no longer convey any meaning of danger. But let me review for you the sound business reasons why good health is essential to your success and why, if you possess it, you should strive to keep it, and why, if you do not possess it, it is necessary for you to get it before anything else.

First of all, *good health means energy—and energy is the dynamic power which enables us to do things.* In fact, nearly all successful men are marked by the possession of apparently unlimited energy.

Can you work better when you are feeling fine or when you feel ill? As a matter of fact, from your own experience in life, haven't you been able to do more and better work when you were feeling fine than when you were feeling not so good? And did you ever notice that it is harder to work when you do not feel right?

Edison once said that the first great essential to achieve anything worth while is hard work. When Henry C. Frick, who was born poor, who became a millionaire before he was thirty, and who recently died leaving a fortune of more than \$125,000,000, was asked the secret

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of his success, he replied: "There is no secret about success. Success simply calls for hard work." Is it possible to do hard work if you aren't in good health? Yes, it is possible, it has been done—but as a general rule the man who is not in good health cannot keep it up long.

Charles Schwab, who in fifteen years rose from a dollar-a-day stake driver to become the head of the Carnegie Steel Company at a salary of \$1,000,000 a year, is noted for his robust good health, his astounding energy, and his great personal magnetism. Would it have been possible for him to have done the many tremendous things he has done if he had not had good health?

Besides being one of the chief sources of energy, good health is also one of the main sources of personality, clear thinking, and other fundamental qualities that help so much in the gaining of success. Men who are in poor health seldom have an attractive personality. When a man is suffering from dyspepsia, it is difficult for him to be agreeable to others. Even a slight headache may make a man disagreeable. Moreover, the man who is not in good health finds it difficult to think clearly. The brain usually works best when the body feels best.

Good health, therefore, is a valuable asset

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to the man who desires to get ahead; and lack of health is a handicap. Business is a very strenuous game, and, although the battle is not always to the strong, the chances favor the strong. Hence, if you do not possess good health, *work to get it* before anything else. In this connection you may recall that President Roosevelt, who was known the world over for his strenuousness and his energy, was heavily handicapped by poor health in his early days. Realizing the value of robust health, he went West and spent several years on a ranch to develop himself. And all through his life he not only preached the value of good health, but he also practiced what he preached by going on hunting expeditions of the most strenuous kind and by taking daily exercises in order to maintain his rugged health, from which, in large measure, his energy and resulting success were derived.

If you are healthy, take pains to preserve and develop this asset. I need not here take up space in telling you how to do it, for, as I have already said, you will find much on this subject in other books.

Lack of Education or Training

Business of to-day is much more intricate and complex than formerly. And the man of

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to-day who expects to make a success in it must know more about business than was formerly required, with the result that lack of education or training is a greater disadvantage than it used to be.

During the past twenty years efficiency in business has increased rapidly, partly as a result of the intensive study that has been made of business and partly as a result of the business training received by men at university schools of commerce, or in classes organized and conducted by the larger corporations for the benefit of their employees. Many of the men entering business to-day are well trained in their work before they begin it, and when they do get into business many of these same men receive an additional training in the classes conducted by their employers.

Business of to-day, in fact, is like a profession; the man who intends to make a success in it must be trained for it. Even after he is in it, he must continue studying it.

All this has tended to raise the standards of the training and knowledge essential to success, and has served to increase the handicap placed on the untrained worker. Of course, hard work, persistency, and common sense are still as valuable as ever in the attainment of business success. But more and more is the

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untrained man being placed at a disadvantage.

There exist to-day, as never before, opportunities to overcome gaps or defects in education. In most of the larger cities general educational classes, as well as classes in specialized work, are given in the evening at the public schools, by private schools, by the Y. M. C. A., the K. of C., and so forth. No matter where one resides, one can always take courses by correspondence, not only from such institutions as the Alexander Hamilton Institute, the Business Training Corporation, and the International Correspondence Schools, for examples, but also from universities—Columbia University and the University of Chicago, for examples. In addition, libraries are accessible almost everywhere, so that there is nothing to prevent any man from studying those subjects about which he feels he ought to know more. *In fact, considering the educational facilities that exist to-day, it may be said that any man that is lacking in education has only himself to blame.* (A list of books on business will be found on page 212.)

Knowing, as you do, that education will always be a valuable asset to you in business, analyze yourself with the view of finding out wherein your own education is weak. Be

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honest with yourself. Is your English as good as it should be? You will use it every day in business, both in talking and in letter writing. And what about your knowledge of arithmetic and the higher forms of mathematics? A good business man must know how to use figures. Have you a general knowledge of economics, office management, bookkeeping, selling, etc.? If you find that you are weak or deficient in one or more of these subjects, start in now to gain the necessary knowledge. Don't let the lack of sufficient education hold you back. Don't let it be an obstacle in your path. It can be overcome, and you know it can, for the facilities for overcoming it are right at your elbow.

Poverty

Poverty never was and never will be an obstacle to success in business. In fact, poverty is often a blessing in disguise, for from struggling to overcome its obvious disadvantages men have been made strong—stronger, indeed, than men who, possessing equal qualities, never were forced to develop them.

I am discussing the point merely because several men who have come to me for advice about their business careers seemed to think that because they did not have much money, or because their parents were partly dependent

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upon them for support, they could not afford to spend money for this or that kind of education, for books, and so forth. They seemed to think that poverty was an almost insurmountable obstacle. This is not so at all. Poverty is a temporary condition which exists only long enough to train a good man how to get the most for his money and how to fight to get what he wants. It supplies him with the incentive to get ahead—to make the money that will eliminate the condition.

In partial substantiation of the fact that poverty in early life is not an obstacle, I wish merely to mention the fact that John D. Rockefeller, George Eastman, Henry Ford, Julius Rosenwald, Thomas E. Wilson, F. W. Woolworth, and many other men who have made such tremendous successes in business were born poor.

Arthur Brisbane, the \$200,000-a-year editor, once said, in the course of an interview, reported in *Success*:

I wasn't a rich young man, thank the Lord. If I had been, I should have been a loafer like other rich young men. Millions of men succeed in spite of poverty, but few succeed in spite of wealth.

Poverty is an obstacle only when it is allowed to be—only when a man permits himself to

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become discouraged and beaten by merely temporary conditions.

Residence in a Small Town

On several occasions young men have said to me: "I live in [naming a small town] and I can't see any future there. What should I do?" They seem to think that residence in a small town is an obstacle to their success—and they are partly wrong and partly right. A small town often does offer a future—that of being "a big frog in a little puddle," which, many of us think, is far better than being "a little frog in a big pond." But to make big money in business, men must go where big money can only be secured—*i. e.*, in the big business centers.

The small town offers many advantages that the big city does not offer—at least not immediately to the man who has not already risen in business. In a small town a man has a better home, good friends and acquaintances, and living is usually cheaper.

On the other hand, there are certain occupations that demand that residence be taken up in a large city. The small town, for example, seldom has enough business to require the full time of a certified public accountant. Hence, the man who is planning and preparing to

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become a certified public accountant must seek the place that can afford to pay him his fees, that does have the business to keep him busy—and this place is, eventually, the large city. Moreover, the man who desires to specialize in advertising must come to the city. And so it goes with most of the specialized occupations.

All this is in addition to the fact that the big city offers greater opportunities to make large salaries—but the competition for these salaries is keener than it is in the small town.

At all events, residence in a small town need not long remain an obstacle. If one has decided upon a certain occupation, and if he realizes that his choice of this occupation means that he will have to go to the city, let him go to the city. What is there to prevent him from saving enough money to keep him for a month or so while he is looking for a position in the city? He will find that his former residence in a small town does not handicap him in the eyes of his employers. And after he has decided to make the move, the quicker he does so the better.

What Will You Be—a Success, a Failure, or an In-Between?

After all, the question of what you will be is right up to yourself to answer. And the

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answer lies *solely* with you. To paraphrase Henley's famous lines:

*You are the master of your fate,
The captain of your soul.*

If you sincerely and earnestly wish to make a success of yourself, you *can* do it and you *will* do it. It is really a question of whether you desire it strongly enough to undergo the hard work that is demanded from all men in return for success.

You may feel that the obstacles that confront you are more difficult than those that confronted other men. You may feel that your case is different. But just recall to your mind that old tried-and-true statement, "You can't keep a good man down." If you are a good man, you can't be kept down. And if you aren't a good man, you can make yourself a good one by study, training, and by striving constantly to develop yourself.

IV

HOW TO GO OUT AFTER THE JOB

"The slow penny is surer than the quick dollar. The slow trotter will out-travel the fleet racer. Genius darts, flutters, and tires; but perseverance wears and wins."—MARDEN.

Knowing How to Sell Your Services

LET us assume now that you have planned out, at least in a general way, what you intend to make of yourself in business, and that you have decided upon the kind of job that you want. The next step is to consider how you should go about getting the job you have in mind.

No matter whether you have a job at present, and no matter whether you like the field you are in, it is good insurance against the future to know how to go about getting a job. You can never know when you may lose your position, through no fault of your own; and you can never tell when you may see an opportunity of changing your position for a better one. Be prepared for such happenings.

Moreover, it is an asset to you to know how

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to get a job, for getting a job is only another way of saying "selling your services." Certainly it is always going to be valuable to you to know how to sell your services—to secure the opportunities you so much desire. Many men in business are getting more for their services than are other men who are as well qualified, simply because the latter did not know how to secure the kind of position in which their qualifications and ability would command their full value. And if, when it comes down to selling yourself into a job, you are a good salesman, you can get better opportunities and more salary than can the man who can offer equal qualifications, but who does not know how or where to sell them.

When I was writing the above paragraph I happened to recall how an acquaintance of mine had prepared to meet the emergency of losing his position, and although he is to-day the head of a nationally known advertising agency, he is still ready at a moment's notice to launch his campaign to secure a job if things should go wrong. Years ago, however, when he was depending upon a small salary to support himself, his wife, and two young children, he realized that if he suddenly lost his job he would have to get another one very quickly before his small savings were eaten up. To

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be ready for such a contingency, he carefully wrote out in detail his entire campaign, even down to the letters of application. Fortunately, however, he has never needed to use it, but it was ready if the occasion ever arose—it was his insurance against possible hardship.

Just now the only thing you have for sale, the only thing that you can get money for, is the service you can give your employer. It is not good business not to try to market it in such a way as to secure its full value. Surely, if you owned a house and desired to sell it, you would try your hardest to get as much as it was worth. The ability, therefore, to sell your services for a just price is valuable to you.

I have seen men, who were not compelled to do so by force of circumstances, take the first job that was offered to them, whereas if they had only tried a little harder to sell their services they could have secured a position with equal or better opportunities, and with five or ten dollars more per week to boot. To accept the first job offered is just as if you accepted the first offer for your house without trying to get other offers.

How to Market Your Services

Getting a job should not mean getting *any* job; it should mean getting the job for which

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you are best fitted and which offers the best opportunities for advancement. The opportunities are more important by far than the salary offered to begin with. To get such a job demands a systematic and careful survey of the market for your services, a well-directed plan for securing what you want, and persistency in carrying out your plan—all of which is called "marketing your services." How one man did it is told below.

A student in one of my evening classes at New York University School of Commerce, Accounts, and Finance was employed as a salesman for a concern that manufactured and sold plumbing fixtures. After having spent several years with this concern this man finally came to the realization that the opportunities for advancement and larger salary at his present place of business were extremely limited because the concern was small and unprogressive. He decided to make a change to some company that was larger and more active.

Now he could have selected one company and could have made his application to that company for a position. But in view of the fact that he was thirty-three years of age, was married, and had two children, he realized that he could not afford to make another mistake and practically waste two or three more years

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in a job that later could not offer opportunities. He wanted a position with a company in which he could stay and advance. To get exactly what he wanted required thinking and planning on his part.

After careful consideration, he finally selected a list of twenty-five companies that sold technical products similar, or nearly similar, to those sold by his present employer, that were progressive, and that, from his own analysis of their personnel and product, he believed offered better opportunities for advancement. He even went so far as to ascertain their credit standings in Bradstreet's rating book, to make sure that they were financially sound. Of course his own knowledge of the trade helped him in selecting his list of prospective employers.

After he had secured his list, he wrote a letter of application to each of the twenty-five concerns. He then had these letters typed by a public stenographer. From his twenty-five applications he received eleven requests to call for a personal interview. He called on each of these eleven and had ready for the interview a carefully prepared sales talk on the value of his services to that company. His calling on the eleven resulted in six definite offers, each of which he tactfully postponed

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his acceptance of on the plea that he was considering other offers.

He next reviewed in detail the opportunities that each of these six companies offered. And then, and only then, did he make his choice.

Five years have now elapsed. This man is still with the concern he chose. He has been steadily advanced and is now the next in line for the position of sales manager. The last time I saw him he told me that he had made no mistake in his selection and that if he were making his choice over again to-day he would pick the same company.

Although he chose the company that offered him the greatest possibilities for advancement, it is interesting to note that the salaries offered him by the six companies ranged from thirty-five dollars a week to forty-eight dollars a week. Even if he had considered salary before opportunities, his careful marketing of his services would have meant a difference of \$676 a year. That is another reason why it pays to market your services right and not to take the first offer that comes to you. The difference in opportunities is even greater, although it cannot be accurately measured in dollars and cents.

In order to market your services properly, you should give careful consideration to these points:

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1. Knowing what you want to get.
2. Knowing what you have to sell.
3. Knowing the market for your services.
4. Knowing how to sell your services to that market.

Before passing on to a consideration of these points you will find it advisable to give heed to this bit of advice: *Take your time about getting a job or in making a change.* Many men have made one mistake after the other by jumping this way and then that way. In the end they find that they are little, if any, better off than when they started.

Getting a job or changing positions is a very serious and important matter to you, personally. And because it is so serious and important, you should carefully consider the matter from all angles before making a move. Such maxims as "Look before you leap," "Better be sure than sorry," and, "Great haste often makes great waste," apply here. Unless circumstances force you, do not snatch the first job offered. Careful consideration and slow, deliberate action will often serve to secure for you not only a better salary, but better opportunities as well.

Knowing What You Want to Get

You should know the kind of position to aim for because, knowing what you want to get,

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you have a better chance of getting it than if you haven't yet been able to make up your mind. Even though you haven't been able to decide upon the occupation that you wish to get into permanently, you should take pains to market your services in just as careful a way as the man who is fortunate enough to know what he wants. You should look for the position that offers opportunities in the form of advancement, for it may later develop that you will like that work and that you will desire to remain in that field. If that state of affairs does come about, you will then not be compelled to lose the rights of seniority that you have won, for your present employment will offer adequate opportunities.

It is not out of place here to mention the fact that many men waste their time in applying for positions for which they do not possess the proper qualifications. Even if they do bluff their way into the positions, they cannot hold them long, and then they are again back at the point from which they started. Moreover, the record they will be asked to submit to the next prospective employer will be blackened by failure. It is certainly not wise for a man to go out over his depth unless he knows how to swim; and it is not good business for a man to apply for a job that he can't swing even if he gets it.

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It is true, however, that a certain amount of bluff will secure opportunities that would otherwise be lost to one. The good salesman must often bluff the office boy into believing that his call is important; but after he has secured the opportunity to present his sales talk to the boss, he succeeds or fails on his ability as a salesman. And so, too, with the applicant for a position: he may bluff the employer into feeling that he can do the work, and he may thus secure the job, but he must be prepared to back up his bluff with real ability.

Knowing What You Have to Sell

Before a good salesman attempts to do any selling, he first makes a careful study of his goods. He tries to know as much as possible about them, so that he can present to the prospective customer their good points. He next studies his prospective customer to find out what the customer would like to know about these goods.

You are in a similar position. You are a salesman, for you are attempting to sell your services to a prospective customer, and selling services is just like selling a product. And you, too, should know what you have to sell and also what the customer would like to know about these services.

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One way to get the right view of this matter is to assume for the moment that you are the owner of a small factory and that you are in need of a bookkeeper and cashier. Assume further that you are now interviewing an applicant for the position. What do you want to know about him? The first questions, possibly, that you would ask him would be these:

1. "What experience have you had in keeping books?"—This is probably the most important question, for it will bring to light what the applicant can do; and ability to do a thing is what you are buying.
2. "Where are you working now?"—If the applicant says that he is working at [naming a place], the next question would be, "Why do you want to leave?" The answer to this latter question may show that the applicant has an undesirable quality. He may say, for example, that he can't get along with the people in his office; or that the work is too hard. From his answers, you may decide that he hasn't the right personal qualities. If, on the other hand, he says that he is not working at present, you would probably ask him, "Why not?" And again his answer may show that he would not make a desirable

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employee. For example, the answer that he hasn't been working for three months might indicate, unless he gave good reasons to the contrary, that he was not a good bookkeeper and had, therefore, been unable to get a job.

3. "What are your references?"—If the bookkeeper is also to act as cashier and to handle your money, you surely would want to make certain that he is honest. In other words, honesty is an essential quality and you would later inquire of his references as to whether they thought him to be honest.

Since the applicant in this instance is facing you, you can judge whether he meets your requirements respecting age, personal appearance, ability to talk well, and so forth. If you are satisfied that the applicant would make a good employee, you would next discuss the question of salary with him.

These questions that you asked the applicant, and this personal judging of him as he sat facing you, were for the purpose, on your part, of ascertaining whether the applicant had what you wanted and, also, *whether he was the best that you could get for the money*. And those same points are what *your* prospective employer

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wants to find in you. He wants to know whether you have the desired and necessary experience and personal qualities required for the position for which you are applying; and *whether you are the best man he can get for the salary the position offers*. And that is why you must know what you have to sell, so that, no matter whether you are applying for the position by letter, by advertising, or in person, you can tell him what he wants to know; so that you can bring out your strong points; and so that you can convince him that you *are* the best man for the place.

In this connection, it is well to remember that it seldom happens that you will be the only applicant for the place. The better the place, the more applicants and the keener the competition. Who do you think will win out over his competitors—the applicant who presents what he has to sell in a careless, take-it-or-leave-it manner, or the applicant who, with equal, or nearly equal qualifications, clearly and concisely describes his qualifications and tries to convince the employer that he is the best man for the position? Getting a job in the face of competition demands the same good salesmanship that selling merchandise demands. To sell your services you must push them. And to be able to push them you must know

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what you have to sell in order that you may emphasize your strong qualities and your peculiar fitness for the position.

Let us next see, in a general way, what things make an applicant's services desirable to the prospective employer. It is not possible to list these points in the order of their importance, for one occupation places more emphasis on the possession of a certain qualification than does another. For illustration, personal appearance would be rated higher by a bond house in its consideration of an applicant for a position as a salesman than it would by a factory considering an applicant for a position as a cost accountant. In general, however, the following qualifications are given consideration:

1. Experience.
 2. Education and training.
 3. Personal qualities:
 - (a) Hard worker.
 - (b) Energy.
 - (c) Pleasant personality.
 - (d) Integrity.
 - (e) Initiative.
 - (f) Appearance.
 - (g) Tact.
 - (h) Ability to handle men.
 - (i) Common sense.
- Etc.

These are the qualifications that employers want in their employees. The more and better

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developed qualifications you have, the more you can get for them.

Knowing How to Find the Market for Your Services

To market your services to the best advantage to yourself demands that you know where to offer your services for sale. If you solicit a job by person or by letter in a hit-or-miss fashion, you will only cause yourself needless work, and in the end you will probably not get such good results as you would if you had carefully studied your market before you took any action.

When the United Cigar Stores Company is planning to open a store in a city, it does not accept the first property offered; nor does it take a chance that a certain location is a good one. It tries to find the place that is the best place in which to offer its goods for sale. To accomplish this purpose, its trained investigators seek to discover the corner or site past which the greatest number of smokers go. Such a spot is the best place in which to market its products—tobacco and accessories.

The taxicab driver knows that there are certain places in which he has the best opportunities to sell his services. Such places are the railroad stations, hotels, theaters, and so forth.

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The salesman of a high-priced adding machine must know who the prospective customers for his machine are before he can go to them to sell it. For example, he knows from experience that the small merchant is generally not a good prospect. And from experience he has learned that his success depends in large measure upon his choice of prospects to call upon.

You are confronted with a similar problem; *i.e.*, to find the list of prospective customers who may have need for your services, who can afford to buy them, and who can give you what you want in the matter of opportunities, experience, and salary.

If you reside in a small city your problem is not a difficult one, for there may be only two or three companies that can give you the kind of job you want. In this case, your real problem is to sell your services to the best of the companies. Or, it may be that you will have to go to a larger city in order to get the kind of position you desire.

With the man residing in the large city the problem is to select carefully the companies that are the best possibilities. To solve this problem he must and should do quite a bit of investigating. He should inquire of his parents and of his friends and acquaintances, especially those who are working in the field in which he

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desires to go. From these sources he should be able to learn the names of concerns that might be likely prospects. He should use his ingenuity, as, for example, one man did who wrote to several editors of trade publications and asked them to give him the names of the four or five largest concerns in that type of business in his city. In fact, he should use his wits to the utmost to get the list of concerns to which he will later attempt to sell his services by letter or by personal solicitation.

It sometimes happens that the kind of job you want is advertised either in newspapers, trade publications, by word of mouth, or otherwise. Your chief problem in that case is one of selling. Or, again, you may find what you want at an employment agency. As a rule, however, the best jobs are not to be secured in these ways. The concerns that offer good opportunities usually have a waiting list to draw from or they pick men from those who apply.

Methods Used in Selling Your Services

When one has realized that getting a job, especially the better kind of job, is really a matter of selling, it becomes necessary for him to determine upon the methods to be used. The chief methods are as follows:

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1. By letter:

- (a) Answering advertisements.

- (b) Soliciting a position not advertised.

2. By personal solicitation.

3. By advertising.

On account of the importance of this general topic the above-mentioned points are discussed in detail in the succeeding chapters.

V

ANSWERING ADVERTISEMENTS

"There is no secret about success. Success simply calls for hard work."—HENRY C. FRICK.

Possible Opportunities

ALTHOUGH the best jobs are, as a rule, not advertised, yet frequently good positions can be secured by answering advertisements appearing in the "Help Wanted" columns of newspapers and in the classified sections of trade journals or trade papers. And, since in your search for a better job you should leave no stone unturned, you will find it advisable not to overlook possible opportunities from this source.

Most advertisements for "Help Wanted" contain neither the name of the advertiser nor his address. Instead, a "blind" address is usually given, as "Box 248, Times." And often, even in the event that the advertiser does give his name and address, he expressly states that all applications must be made by

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letter. This is done purposely so that the advertiser may not have his place of business swamped by applicants. Applications for positions advertised are, therefore, usually made by letter.

Should "Blind" Advertisements Be Answered?

One of the common stories heard in business is that of the man who replied to a "blind" advertisement (one that has no address other than a post-office or newspaper box number) only to find out later that his own employer had done the advertising. This story has become a business legend, with the result that many men are afraid to answer blind advertisements.

Of course it is possible that your present employer is the advertiser, but the chances are so much against the coincidence of your writing a letter of application for that job that the so-called danger need not be considered. Methods of safeguarding your interests, however, are shown on page 128.

How Your State of Mind Influences Your Chances

Before taking up in detail how the letter of application is written it is advisable to consider the fact that the state of mind of the applicant towards his chances of landing the position

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by means of his letter influences to a great extent the kind of letter that he will write. The wrong state of mind, without doubt, injures the chances of the applicant; the right state of mind helps them.

There are two kinds of mental attitude towards the writing of an application for a position advertised that injure the chances of the applicant. The first is the thought that there will not be much competition for the job. This attitude often leads the applicant to spend but little time and thought on his letter, with the result that he writes a careless and a very ordinary letter which receives no consideration. The second is the thought that the letter will not have much of a chance, anyway, because there will be so many other applicants; that the position may have been filled by this time; or that there are many others applying for the position who are better qualified; and so forth. Such a man is beaten before he starts. He is discouraged. And, thinking that he has little or no chance of landing the job, he may say to himself: "What's the use of wasting much time on a letter of application? I'll get the job or I won't get it." The result of this attitude is that he does not strive very hard to write a good letter. Let us first consider the case of the man who thinks

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that there will not be much competition for the job.

Unless you have had the experience of looking over the letters received in response to an advertisement for "Help Wanted," you cannot realize the competition, at least in the number of applications, for a position advertised. I have several times had occasion to advertise for stenographers, salesmen, etc., for companies for which I was working. Often the number of applications for a single job would reach three hundred. And it is not at all rare in business to receive more than four hundred applications for one job. Of course, the number of applications received in answer to an advertisement varies according to business conditions, locality, the kind of job, and so forth. During the period 1916-19, for example, when unemployed workers of all kinds were scarce, the number of applications received was not large. Under normal conditions, however, there is always keen competition for a good job. And an applicant for a position should always have that fact in mind when he is writing his letter. An ordinary letter of application won't get him very far; in all probability it will not even receive consideration, except to be glanced at and then thrown away or filed. *If you really want to stand a*

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chance to be considered for the position, you must write the very best letter you know how.

With respect to the case of the applicant who is discouraged at the outset, I can only say that my own experience has been that no man who persistently went after a job failed to get one. He often did not secure it the first time, nor the second time; but by keeping after it, by refusing to be discouraged by the fact that the odds in every case were apparently against him, he got what he wanted in the end. And those are the men who always *do* get what they want—the men who will not be discouraged, but who keep on plugging away. Certainly the chances are enough against a man without making them worse by writing a careless, indifferent letter because he feels that there isn't much of a chance.

As a matter of interest, just what are the chances for landing a position that is advertised? To begin with, let us assume that the average number of letters of application received for an ordinary job, in a large city, under normal conditions is two hundred. Are your chances, then, one to two hundred? No, they are better than that, provided you have the required qualifications. At least 50 per cent of the applicants either do not possess all the required qualifications, or do not bring them

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out in their letters. That fact brings the chances down to one to one hundred. The next point to take into consideration is that not ten men out of a hundred can write a good letter of application. Most of these ninety men don't know how, some don't realize the keenness of the competition, and accordingly write careless and indifferent letters, and some are so discouraged at their chances that their letters are only half-hearted attempts to sell their services. So if you can and do write a good, strong letter of application, your chances, instead of being one to two hundred, are actually one to ten, or thereabouts, or even better. And that is why it pays to be able to write a good letter of application.

The following illustration may make the point clearer: An acquaintance of mine was the advertising manager of a company that manufactures a nationally advertised roller bearing for use in automobiles, machinery of various kinds, and so forth. He wanted to secure a technically trained man to act as his assistant. In order to get in touch with such a man he advertised the position in *Iron Age*, a technical journal. He received approximately three hundred applications. He did not read any of the letters until ten days had elapsed and until he was sure that he had heard from

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everybody who might be interested. Then, one day, he sat down at his desk with all these applications in a pile before him and began to read them. He did not read every letter through. A glance at this one showed that the applicant was too old; at that one, that not enough details were given; and so forth. Those letters that showed that the applicant could not be considered were placed in one pile; possibilities were placed in another. After he had finished this preliminary sorting he discovered that he had about twenty-six possibilities. These he carefully reread, and by comparison eliminated seventeen. There were now only nine left and, strange to say, *each of these nine was typewritten*. To these applicants he sent a letter with the request that they come to his place of business for interviews, traveling expenses to be paid by his company. After he had interviewed each one he finally chose the man he wanted.

From this illustration please take note of the following facts—facts that hold true in most cases:

1. The letters of only nine applicants, out of three hundred, received serious attention.
2. These nine applicants were selected for interviews on their letters alone.
3. The nine letters were typewritten.
4. The letters secured interviews—not the job.

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The last three points will be considered in a later section of this book. The only point I wish to make here is that if you can and do meet the requirements for the position, and if you write a good letter of application, your chances are not one to three hundred or two hundred, but one to ten, or thereabouts.

For the purpose of discussion let us assume that you can meet the requirements for the position. The next point to consider is how to write a good letter of application.

The letter applying for a position is a sales letter because it is attempting to sell something—i. e., services. And since it is a sales letter, it should perform the four functions of selling, as follows:

1. Attract favorable attention.
2. Create desire.
3. Convince.
4. Stimulate action.

How to Attract Favorable Attention

The first step in selling is to attract favorable attention. Before the salesman can start to create desire in the mind of the prospective customer for his goods, he must first get by the office boy and secure the customer's attention. He must get the customer to listen to him and be disposed favorably towards him. The good

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salesman knows how valuable in accomplishing this purpose is his personal appearance. The better dressed he is the less chance is there of the office boy keeping him out, and the greater consideration will he receive from the customer. He knows, also, that at the beginning of his sales talk he must use his best efforts to secure the customer's full attention.

The same qualities that help the personal salesman to attract favorable attention will help the letter of application to achieve results; that is, the letter of application should have a good appearance, and the opening paragraph should secure the attention of the reader.

The Value of Good Appearance of the Letter

It sometimes happens that an employer, instead of reading or even glancing through each of two or three hundred letters of application, will select merely fifteen or twenty of the best-looking letters for consideration. He does this either because he is limited for time and does not wish to burden himself with the careful consideration of each and every application; or because the good-looking letters attracted his attention first; or because he has learned from experience that a poor-looking letter usually means a poor applicant, a good-looking letter a good applicant. Whatever

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the reason, there is little doubt of the fact that the letter of good appearance has the call over the letter of poor appearance. Why lessen your chances by sending a letter that does not look good?

Moreover, if the employer is conscientious in giving careful consideration to each letter, he is just as much inclined as other types of employers to be more favorably disposed towards the writer of the letter of good appearance than to the writer of the letter of poor appearance.

How to Make Your Letters Good-looking

The appearance of the letter depends upon three things, as follows:

1. Stationery.
2. Form and arrangement of material on the letter sheet.
3. The writing or typewriting.

First of all, the stationery used should be regular business stationery (size, 11 by 8½ inches)—not social stationery (the four-page or folded sheet). This letter sheet should be of a good quality bond. You can buy a few sheets of such paper, with envelopes to match, at almost any stationery store. The color should be white. Do not use hotel or club stationery, for such use often creates a prejudice against you in the mind of the prospective employer.

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It is also safer practice not to "borrow" letter sheets bearing the name of the concern in whose employ you may happen to be at the time of writing the letter.

The heading of your letter, consisting of your address and of the date, should be placed in the upper right-hand corner of the letter sheet, about one inch down from the top of the sheet and with its lines ending about three-quarters of an inch from the right-hand edge. The inside address (name and address of person or concern written to) should begin about three-quarters of an inch from the left-hand margin and about two and one-half inches from the top of the sheet. Leave a good margin at both sides of the sheet (at least three-quarters of an inch), and at the bottom (at least one inch). It is often a good practice to use headings, such as *Education*, *Experience*, and *References*, before the paragraphs dealing with these matters. The letter given on page 93 is an example of good form and arrangement. Study it carefully.

If at all possible, always have your letters typewritten. A typewritten letter has a big advantage over a handwritten letter because it looks much better, is more easily read, and, since the large majority of letters received will be in handwriting, it will stand out conspicuously. If

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you cannot get some one in a business office to type your letter for you, go to a public stenographer and have it done, although you can ill afford the expense. Typewriting your letter may easily mean the difference between getting and not getting the position you want; it may mean the difference between writing two letters (typewritten) for positions and writing ten letters (handwritten), together with the resulting delay in getting the job.

Compare the letters on pages 88 and 89. One is typewritten, the other handwritten. Is there any doubt in your mind that the typewritten letter looks much better? Wouldn't you rather read the typewritten letter than the other? So would the prospective employer.

Some of the advertisements for the lower class of positions contain the expression "Reply in own handwriting." This is put in because the position advertised is usually for a book-keeper or clerical worker whose work calls for quite a bit of writing and figuring, and the employer wishes to judge from the letter whether the applicant writes a neat, legible hand. It is sometimes put in to insure that the applicant himself writes the letter, not some older person. As a general rule, however, even if such an expression does appear in an advertisement you are answering, it is not unwise to disregard

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it, to have your letter typewritten, and then at the end of your letter to write several lines in your own handwriting, together with a sample of your figuring, with the explanation that you are submitting them as samples of your handwriting and figuring. In such an instance, your typewritten letter would be especially conspicuous.

The First Paragraph of Your Letter

The beginning of a letter of application is probably the most difficult part of the letter to write—that is to say, it is difficult if you are striving to make it a good beginning. To be sure, it is easy enough to start out with such a commonplace opening as, “Having seen your advertisement in the *New York Times*, I thought I would write.” But to begin with a paragraph that is not hackneyed, a paragraph that is different and that stands a chance of lifting your application out of the ruck, demands some little originality and thought.

Remember that the opening paragraph of the letter is like the headline of an advertisement in that one of its chief purposes is to attract attention so that the whole material will be read. An ordinary beginning does not arouse any interest to read farther. A beginning out of the ordinary not only arouses interest, but

Yale College,
New Haven, Conn.
May 15, 1921.

The J. F. Smith Co.,
Mahan Building,
New York City

Gentlemen:

From conversations with various men interested in the advertising field, I have learned that your company is ranked as one of the best advertising agencies in New York. It is for this reason chiefly that I am writing to you to ask you to consider my application for a position as assistant to one of your account executives.

I am at present a senior at Yale College and shall be graduated about June 20. I am 22 years old. During my college course I have specialized in English and in

Yale College,
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May 15, 1931.

The J. F. Smith Co.,
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Gentlemen:

From conversations with various men interested in the advertising field, I have learned that your company is ranked as one of the best advertising agencies in New York. It is for this reason chiefly that I am writing to you to ask you to consider my application for a position as assistant to one of your account executives.

I am at present a senior at Yale College and shall be graduated about June 20. I am 22 years old. During my college course I have specialized in English and in economics. I have also had a little experience with advertising work, having helped to secure accounts and to write copy while I was a member of the business department of one of the college publications - The Yale Record.

My short experience with advertising has made me feel that I should like to make it my life's work. I have found that I like to meet and talk with prospective clients about their advertising, and believe that I have been of some assistance to them in preparing copy.

I am willing to start from the beginning so that I can secure a good foundation in advertising knowledge.

If you will let me know when I may see you at your offices in New York, I shall be glad to go down so that you can judge me at a personal interview.

Yours truly,

George R. MacKay
George R. MacKay

THE SAME LETTER IMPROVED IN APPEARANCE THROUGH BEING
TYPEWRITTEN

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also indicates that the applicant himself is out of the ordinary. A letter that stands out on account of the excellent manner in which it is written certainly indicates ability. *A good man may write an ordinary, commonplace letter; but a good letter is seldom written by an ordinary applicant—and the prospective employer knows it.*

In your efforts to get a different kind of beginning, do not commit the mistake of making it eccentric, foolish, or forced. But say what you want to say in a manner that has not been worn threadbare. Get away from such beginnings as the following:

Having seen your advertisement in the Chicago Tribune for a position as correspondent in a credit department, I thought I would write . . .

I am answering your advertisement for a bookkeeper that appeared in yesterday's Public Ledger . . .

In response to your recent advertisement in the Journal, I beg leave to apply for the position . . .

I noticed your advertisement in today's Herald and wish you would consider me for the place . . .

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Such beginnings as the following are better:

Such a position as correspondent in your credit department demands the services of a man who, on account of his experience, knowledge of human nature, and ability to express himself well, can refuse credit diplomatically and without offense to the applicant and who can, in granting it, build up goodwill for the house. With all due modesty, I have learned how to do these things and do them well . . .

If it were possible, one of the best ways for you to assure yourself that I am a really good bookkeeper would be to come to my present place of business and see how well I keep my books . . .

Naturally you want to get the best man you can for the position you recently advertised in the Journal. And in considering applicants you wish to know as much as possible about them. In order to help you find your man, I am giving below full details concerning myself, together with my reasons for considering myself capable of doing this work to your complete satisfaction . . .

The best evidence that I can offer you to show that I am the man for the salesman's position you advertised in to-day's Herald is that last year my sales to jobbers were over \$125,000 ...

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Your advertisement for a junior accountant states that you want "one who has had experience in preparing income tax reports." During the past year I personally prepared or assisted in preparing more than 300 reports, of which number more than 25 were those of large mercantile establishments . . .

It is not necessary to state the fact that you saw the advertisement in a certain newspaper or magazine.

Whenever a special or essential requirement is contained in the advertisement (such as, "must prove ability to sell," "should have had previous experience in export trade"), showing that you have the desired qualification usually makes an effective first paragraph. This is so because the employer is particularly interested in this point, and if you discuss it at the beginning of your letter the chances are that he will become interested in your letter.

Beware of an egotistical beginning, such as: "You need not look any farther. I am the man for the place." Although such a beginning is out of the ordinary and would probably attract attention, the reader might react unfavorably to it. He might think, "This fellow is too fresh." On the other hand, the humble, pleading, and unassertive types of beginnings are to be avoided because they are weak. For

142 West 52nd Street,
New York City,
June 4, 1921.

6 142 Times Downtown

Dear Sir:

To prove that I possess the qualifications for the position of expert stenographer advertised by you, I am listing the essential details below.

Age: 23

Education: 4 years at the High School of Commerce; was graduated in 1917; specialized in stenography and typewriting.

Experience: 2 years with Ackerson, Merrill & Co., of 39 Park Place, first as general stenographer and then as private stenographer for Mr. E. L. Merrill, the treasurer of the company.

2 years as private stenographer for Mr. George Manning, secretary of The American Food Products Corporation of 120 Broadway, where I am still employed.

My present duties demand that I attend and report all meetings and conferences that are held at the main office of this company.

Ability: I can take 150 words a minute without trouble and have no difficulty in getting down accurately the remarks made. I have learned from experience the absolute necessity of accuracy in these matters. My transcription is painstakingly carried out and is set forth in a presentable style.

Mr. Manning will vouch for my work in case you decide to consider me although, for obvious reasons, I trust you will not refer to him unless you decide to take me.

Reason for Change: I have talked over with Mr. Manning the possibilities of further advancement in his office. The next step would logically be into the position of private secretary, but as that position is now capably filled by his present secretary, I know that I must look elsewhere for larger opportunities.

If you will grant me an interview during my lunch hour, 1 - 2 P. M., I shall be glad to show you some of my work and to have you test my ability. My telephone is Westor 321.

Yours truly,

John K. Adams

EXAMPLE OF GOOD ARRANGEMENT OF A LETTER OF APPLICATION

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example, such a beginning as, "I am sorry to take up your time, but would you mind considering me for the job? I should like to get it very much," would make the reader feel that the applicant has no backbone. The most effective type of beginning is that which is original, interesting, and arresting. It is better, too, that it be assertive rather than unassertive.

Other Means of Attracting Attention

Not only is it possible to attract the attention of the reader, when he is reading the hundreds of applications, to your letter by the good appearance of your letter and by the different style of your opening paragraph, but it is also possible to get his attention by other means. One method that entails a slight expense is to send your application by telegraph, using for this purpose the so-called "Night Letter" rates, which will permit you to send fifty words at the regular ten-word rate. This telegram would be delivered to the office of the newspaper in which the advertisement appeared and would be placed in the box number assigned to that advertisement. Of course, if the advertiser gave his name and address, the telegram could be sent direct to him. At all events, the chances would be very much in favor of the fact that

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the application in telegram form would be among the first to be opened and read.

Another method is to use a large envelope instead of the usual No. 6 business envelope. A No. 10, or a legal-sized envelope, could be used. The larger-sized envelope will often attract attention to the letter. Sometimes it may be advisable to put red ink on the lower right-hand corner of the envelope—and similar methods may be used to attract attention to the envelope and then to its inclosure.

Creating Desire

Creating desire for your services is the second step to be taken. It is usually performed by describing your qualifications for the position in such a way that the prospective employer is made to believe that you would make him a desirable employee and that your application should, therefore, receive careful consideration.

In most advertisements of "Help Wanted," certain definite requirements are set forth, as they are, for example, in the following advertisement:

CORRESPONDENCE.

A service corporation has an opening in its correspondence department for a young man with a comprehensive knowledge of English and sound business judgment; this is an opening which offers a

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splendid opportunity to study high-grade business correspondence and correspondence supervision, carrying with it unusual chances for advancement; let your reply tell us why you feel particularly qualified for the position and state your education, experience, and salary expected. W 367, Times.

Since in this instance the employer describes the requirements for the position, and in order that you may create desire in his mind for your services *you should meet each of the requirements that you can by describing in detail your qualifications.* The more squarely you can meet his needs, the better chance you have of making him want you. In other words, the employer has already made up in his mind a picture of the kind of man he wants. Your problem is to show him how well you fit his picture of that man. In order to fit yourself into the picture, you should, before writing your letter, list the requirements. This employer desires a man who

1. Is young.
2. Has a comprehensive knowledge of English.
3. Has sound business judgment.

He wants you to state

1. Why you feel qualified for the position.
2. Your education.
3. Your experience.
4. Salary expected.

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After you have made a list of the requirements as called for by the advertisement, the next step is to consider how you are going to meet each requirement, in what order of arrangement you will take up each point, and the relative importance of each point so that you can emphasize, by giving details, those points which are of the greatest importance in showing your fitness for the position.

One order of arrangement that might be used is as follows:

1. Age.
2. Education.
3. Experience.
4. Knowledge of English.
5. Business judgment.
6. Why you feel qualified for the position.
7. Salary expected.

Such an order of arrangement of topics is logical, and each point leads into the next. Of course, if you can show that you have had a specialized training for the position, or that you have done something that makes you especially well fitted for the job, you may depart from the order outlined above and secure added emphasis by placing such a point first. A proper order is secured by careful thought and by considering just how one point relates to and leads into the next or prepares the way for it. In the order given above, for example,

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details of your education and of your experience may help to show that you have a comprehensive knowledge of English and a sound business judgment. "Why you feel qualified for the position" logically comes next, for in discussing this point you will make use of the facts about your education and experience already outlined in your letter. The question of salary is logically left until the last, because the price of your services should not be mentioned until after you have "sold" the prospect, until after you have made him feel that you are the man for the place. If it is possible to do so, it is often best to leave the question of salary to the time of the interview. (See page 127.)

The next question to decide is, "What is the relative importance of each of the seven points?" Since the employer wants a correspondent whom he wishes to train in correspondence supervision, knowledge of English is one of the most important requirements. The applicant not only must be able to use good English in his own dictation (it is especially important in this job because the employer says that it is a high-grade business), but also must he have a comprehensive knowledge of English in view of the fact that his work of supervising correspondence demands that he be able to correct the English of other dictators.

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The second most important requirement is sound business judgment, for although the applicant may have a good command of English he may not possess business judgment and may, therefore, be unable both to handle his own letters in a good business way and to correct errors in business judgment made by the correspondents whose letters he will supervise.

Since these two points (knowledge of English and sound business judgment) are so important, you should go into them in detail. And it should be said at this point that *the better you understand just what the employer wants, the better you can show how your qualifications fit you for that work*. Hence, in answering an advertisement, read it through several times and try to see the kind of work that the new employee will be called upon to do. By doing this you will be able to write a letter that indicates that you know exactly what the employer has in his mind regarding the kind of employee he desires. This knowledge, also, will help you to select from your education, experience, and other qualifications just those points that will be most effective in causing the employer to feel that you are the man for the job.

Let us now construct this part (creating desire) of the letter:

Age 22

Education I am a graduate of Public School 88 and of the High School of Commerce, both of New York City.

Experience After graduation from high school I went to work with Robt. Ingersoll & Bro. as a clerk in the order department. After a year's experience in this work I was promoted to the position of correspondent in the same department. I not only gained considerable experience in dictating letters, but I also handled a great many of my letters by means of a form paragraph manual, so that I am acquainted with this method of carrying on routine correspondence. After an experience of a year and a half as correspondent with this company I secured a position as correspondent in the credit department of the United States Rubber Company. I have now been with this company for two years, during which time I have received several advancements both in position and in salary.

Knowledge of English The best indication of my knowledge of English is this letter, for from it you can judge whether I use good grammar and English. My three and a half years of experience as a correspondent have developed my knowledge of English still further. During this period I have read and studied a number of books on business letter-writing and English, with the intention of increasing my knowledge of English as much as possible.

Business Judgment My past two years of experience as correspondent in the credit department of the United States Rubber Company have shown me the great value of business judgment. In my work I had to be exceedingly careful not to offend a prospective customer when I was attempting to secure credit information from him.

Why I Feel Qualified On account of my three and one half years of experience as a correspondent, I feel that I am qualified, after a few instructions concerning your methods and policies, to act as a correspondent in your business. I believe that both my former employer and my present employer will testify to my ability. Until you are ready to consider me seriously for this position, may I ask you not to inquire of the United States Rubber Company concerning me. You can readily understand that such inquiring might react unfavorably on me.

My main reason for desiring to make a change from my present place is that I desire to take a position that will lead into the correspondence supervision field. I realize the importance to business houses of good letters, and I believe that there are good opportunities in supervision work.

I am at present receiving \$34 a week. To show my earnestness to get into a field I like, and which has opportunities, I shall even be willing to work for you at a lower salary.

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In describing your qualifications, be specific. Do not use such general terms as, "I have had a good education," or, "I have received a fine training." Tell what your education consists of, or describe your training in detail. Nor should you make such general assertions as, "I am honest and enthusiastic," or, "I am ambitious"; they are too general to count.

Convincing the Reader

The third function that the letter of application should perform is convincing the reader. In creating desire you may make certain assertions. You *say* you "have good business judgment"; that you are "able to collect money by mail." It is necessary, however, that you *prove* what you assert is true. That is called convincing the reader and it is accomplished by the use of logical reasoning and evidence. As a rule the process of convincing the reader is carried on along with the process of creating desire. In the letter of application given above you may have noticed that the writer attempts to prove that he has a sound knowledge of English by the use of logical reasoning; he brings out the fact that he has received a sound training in correspondence work during his three and one half years with two good companies; that his work

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has merited several promotions; that he has studied books on letter writing and English. In addition, he offers his letter as evidence of the fact that he knows English.

A common fault found in many letters of application is that the writer fails to supply logical reasoning or evidence to back up his assertions. He *says* he is a "good credit man," but he does not attempt to prove it. He *says* he has been "very successful as a salesman," but he fails to offer any evidence in support of his statement. *The applicant must prove his case*—he must prove to the prospective employer that he really does possess the desired qualifications. The mere statement that he has them is not sufficient.

Very often the letter itself that the applicant writes is the best kind of evidence, for it shows his ability, originality, power to think and write clearly, and many other qualities. Many employers judge the applicant almost entirely on the basis of his letter. From experience they have learned that it takes a good man to write a good letter of application, and from experience they have acquired the ability to pick applicants for interviews from their letters. This is another reason why you should try to write the best letter you know how.

Gentlemen:

Can I sell goods by letter?

The answer to that question, I believe, is what you want to know.

Enclosed you will find copies of two letters that I wrote about a month ago. Letter A was sent to a list of 9,000 prospects and brought back 15% returns. It showed a net profit of \$1,218. Letter B was mailed to a list of 14,000 prospects secured 21% orders - a net profit of \$2,664.

These two letters show what I can do and have done. I can bring to the interview other letters I have written.

I am 28 years old, a graduate of Princeton, and have had six years experience in selling. I am now drawing a salary of \$85 a week.

My reason for desiring a change is that I am looking for bigger opportunities.

My telephone is Broad 4610.

Yours truly,

AN APPLICATION IN REPLY TO AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR A MAN WHO
CAN SELL BY MAIL

HOW TO CHOOSE AND GET A BETTER JOB

References

References from former employers and from others are also of use in convincing the prospective employer that you are the man you claim to be. At the same time, even a good reference often has only slight weight, for from experience prospective employers have learned that unless there is something very bad against a man, he can usually get a letter of recommendation from the employer that he is leaving. You should not, therefore, rely too much on your references or on your letters of recommendation.

Again, the younger and the more progressive employers are in the habit of depending chiefly on their own judgment of the man—a judgment made at the interview.

References and letters of recommendation have more weight in some instances than in others. A bank or trust company, for example, would look you up much more carefully than an advertising agency. Since your position in the first instance would be one of trust, they would investigate your reputation for integrity, your habits, standing in the community, and so forth; in the latter instance, these matters would not be of so great importance.

In giving references do not give only the name and address of the company you formerly

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worked for, but in addition give the name and title of your immediate superior in that company. By so doing you will insure that an inquiry concerning you will be answered more quickly and will be more satisfying to the prospective employer. It is sometimes advisable, and a matter of courtesy, to inform your references that you have taken the liberty of mentioning their names as references. This precaution often serves to prepare the reference for the inquiry, with the result that he is disposed to reply more quickly and more definitely than otherwise would be the case.

In some instances it is well to give the telephone number of the reference so that the prospective employer can call up and secure the desired information quickly. In fact, the general tendency in business to-day is toward a personal conversation over the telephone with the reference. Such a method is quicker and usually more satisfactory than is inquiring by letter. In this connection it is well to note that some employers, particularly in the financial field, have adopted the rule not to give written recommendations, for from experience they have learned that these are sometimes misused. Instead, they inform the departing employee that they will be glad to answer inquiries in person or on the telephone. In such instances

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it is obvious that the applicant should ask the prospective employer to inquire by telephone.

Give the best reference possible. By this is meant that if you are able to give five or six references, it is better to put down only two or three of the best—*i. e.*, those who you believe will be most likely to write a strong letter of recommendation for you and who will in all probability reply to the inquiry *immediately*. Don't give as a reference the name of a man who does not know you or your work very well. The best he can do is to write a rather non-committal letter that will injure rather than help you.

It sometimes happens that, on account of a disagreement with his employer, an employee has left with bad feelings on both sides. It is clear that it is not wise to refer to such an employer. (This illustration proves the advisability of trying to keep the good will of an employer, even though one is leaving him. One never knows when it will be an asset to be able to refer to him.)

Before giving a reference make sure that the name of the reference is correctly spelled and that the address is right. Negligence in these matters may mean that the letter of inquiry from the prospective employer will be delayed in getting to your reference, with the result

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that the prospective employer, not hearing from your references, passes you by for another applicant whose references reply at once.

I am here reminded of an incident that came under my attention several years ago. A young man who had been trying to find a position in an export house saw an advertisement for just the kind of job he desired. The advertisement stated that a man was wanted immediately to fill a vacancy.

As soon as he had read the advertisement he telephoned to two of his former employers and asked them to write letters of recommendation for him and mail them to the box number of the prospective employer. He secured their promises to do it immediately. Then he sat down and wrote his letter of application in which he stated that to save the prospective employer delay in writing to his references he had asked his references to write to the prospective employer to-day. He included a telephone number at which he could be reached, had his letter typed and mailed, and then awaited results.

At eleven o'clock on the day following he received a telephone call to appear for an interview.

At the appointed time he presented himself and, after a short examination, was hired. As he was preparing to leave the office his new employer complimented him upon his origi-

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nalinity and foresight. He went on to say that among the first few letters he had opened, he had found the two letters of recommendation, and that at first had been unable to understand why they had been sent to him; that only after he had come upon the letter of application had he realized the reason. As he was in immediate need of a man, and as he had been saved the trouble and delay of writing to these references, he had decided to see this applicant and to hire him if, at the interview, he came up to expectations.

Another method is to get a letter of recommendation from your employer when you leave him. Afterwards, whenever you are looking for a better job, you can make use of it. Do not, however, send the original, for sometimes, through oversight, recommendations are not returned. Instead, make a copy of it, and mark it "Copy." This method of sending a letter or two of recommendation along with your letter may be the thing that lands the job for you, for the persons referred to by the other applicants under consideration may delay answering, with the result that the prospective employer, being in need of a man right away, or becoming irritated by the delay, will choose you in preference, perhaps, to an applicant who has better qualifications.

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Other Forms of Evidence

Certain types of positions offer the opportunity to the applicant of proving his ability by means of samples of his work; for illustration, an applicant for a position as advertising copy writer can submit copies of advertisements that he has written; an applicant for a position as stenographer should typewrite his letter of application as neatly and as well as he can; an applicant for a position as clerk "who must be able to write a good, legible hand" should give a sample of his handwriting.

A few months ago I had the opportunity of reading the letters of application that came in response to a full-page advertisement in *Printers' Ink* for a twenty-five-thousand-dollar-a-year copy writer. The letters that received serious consideration were masterpieces of salesmanship. Their writers realized that in the eyes of the prospective employer their letters were about the best evidence that could be presented, for if an advertising copy writer cannot sell *himself* by means of *written words*, how can he expect to convince his employer that he possesses the ability to sell goods to other people by means of *printed words*? In addition to their letters, many of these men sent in copies of their best advertisements, for they appre-

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ciated the fact that one of the best ways to judge of a man's ability to do a certain kind of work is by seeing what work he has already done.

Newspaper or magazine clippings of notices about a noteworthy achievement relevant to the work of the position carry weight. Published articles written by the applicant, and bearing on some phase of his work, are valuable. In the case of salesmen, especially, photographs are desirable as evidence, for from a photograph the employer is often able to judge whether the applicant has a suitable personal appearance.

Stimulating Action

The fourth function to be performed in the letter of application is stimulating action. This function is performed by urging the prospective employer to take immediate action on your application, and by making it easy for him to get in touch with you. More specifically, it is the attempt to stir the reader, not to give you the job, but to give you an interview, for the interview must be secured before you can expect to get the job.

It may be well to say here that many applicants make the mistake of asking for the job, expecting, apparently, that they will receive by return mail a letter informing them that they

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have been given the position. Only in extremely rare cases does that happen. In the great majority of instances an applicant is not hired until after he has appeared at a personal interview. In view of this fact, therefore, *you should ask, not for the position, but for an interview.*

The examples given below illustrate methods by which action is stimulated:

Perhaps, after all, the best way to determine whether I have the desired personal qualifications is by an interview, at which you can judge for yourself. A letter will reach me at 35 Waverly Place, or you can get me on the telephone at Andrew 5067, between the hours of 9-12, and 1-5.

I wish you would grant me a personal interview at which I can give you more details concerning my qualifications and at which you will have the opportunity of judging whether I am the man for the place. Since I am working, I shall appreciate it if you will arrange to have the interview come between 12-1. If this is not possible, I can arrange with my present employer to let me off at a time more convenient for you. My telephone is Wooster 267.

If my application has indicated my ability to fill the position to your satisfaction, I shall appreciate

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it if you will let me know when I may call so that you can judge my general personal qualifications.

If you will let me know when it will be convenient for you to see me, I shall be at your office at that time so that you can question me in more detail concerning my qualifications. A stamped and addressed envelope is inclosed for your convenience.

The following illustrations show incorrect methods of stimulating action. These methods are wrong chiefly because the tone is offensive. They fail, moreover, to take into consideration the fact that the interview must come first:

Please let me know immediately whether you will give me the job, for I am considering two other positions and the first man to give me a good offer will get me.

If the job is what you say it is, and if the salary is O. K., I shall be glad to go to work for you. But you must let me know right away, because I cannot waste time if you are not sure you want me.

Other Points to Consider

In addition to the points given above, other points concerning the writing of a letter of appli-

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cation should be considered. Of these, one of the most important is that of the tone of the letter.

I have often been asked such questions as these: "How can I avoid appearing egotistical?" "How can I avoid using so many I's?" "I'm afraid that the tone of my letter will offend the reader because it seems egotistical of me to praise my own qualifications. How can I get around it?" The men who asked me these questions showed that they realized the value of proper tone in the letter and that they were afraid that so many "I's," as in "*I* have been assistant to the manager of this department for five years, in which time *I* have received a good, sound training in financial promotion work," might make their letters appear egotistical and, therefore, offensive.

In answering their questions I have said that since they are selling their own services, they naturally must talk about themselves. An attempt not to use "I's" would only result in awkwardness of expression. It is much better to write, "*I* attended New York University School of Commerce, Accounts, and Finance for two years, where *I* specialized in accounting," than to say, "*The writer* attended . . ." It is not offensive egotism to speak frankly and honestly about oneself when one has been asked

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to do so. It is offensive egotism, however, to overpraise one's ability and to neglect to consider the reader's feelings, as in "I know I am the best man for the place," and "If you want me you will have to speak up."

In certain fields of business, self-assertiveness and aggressiveness are especially valuable traits. This fact is particularly true of personal salesmanship. An overmodest and retiring applicant does not stand much of a chance for a position as salesman, for employers know that a good salesman is usually a strong believer in his own ability and that this trait has a tendency to make him aggressive and, sometimes, even somewhat conceited. For this reason the strong, aggressive letter of application is more favorably received than is the more modest type of letter.

The applicant for other kinds of jobs can make good use of the fact brought out above. Since a letter of application attempts to sell services, and since a good salesman is not overmodest and unassertive, it stands to reason, therefore, that a good letter of application cannot afford to be overmodest and unassertive. The meek, humble, pleading letter makes a poor impression on the reader, for, as the reader may say to himself, "If this applicant isn't sure himself that he can fill the job capably, how can I be sure?"

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The applicant who strongly believes that he can meet the requirements and that he will fit the place is almost bound to write a strong, assertive letter. The salesman who knows that he has a good article is usually enthusiastic and assertive in trying to sell it; the salesman who is not quite sure that his article is free from defects is timid about pushing it hard.

The following deduction concerning the tone of a letter of application may now be made: *The stronger and more assertive the letter without becoming offensive, the better the impression it will make; and the meeker and more humble the letter, the poorer the impression it will make.*

Moreover, the tone of the letter often gives the reader a good insight into the ability of the applicant. The applicant whose letter is weak and whining in tone is likely to be a "weak sister." On the other hand, the applicant who tries to present his qualifications in their best light (leaving it to the prospective employer to find any defects), and who uses a brisk, bold tone in his letter, is likely to impress the reader with the idea that he is a "live wire," a pusher—the kind of man most employers want. That bit of advice to speakers on how to convince and persuade their listeners holds good here: "Be bold, be bold, but not too bold." Homer

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is credited with the saying, "A decent boldness ever meets with friends."

It is well to have in mind, however, that assertiveness can very easily be overdone, with the result that a disagreeable impression is made on the reader, and, since you are seeking a favor (an interview) from the reader, his feelings and reactions must always be considered. The letter that is too assertive and aggressive in tone, that is presumptuous or "fresh," is exceedingly objectionable. Such tones of themselves often ruin applicants' chances.

Notice the following examples showing the use of incorrect tones:

Some lucky concern is going to grab me up in the next few days, so you'll have to speak up if you want me.

I am just the man you want and the sooner we get together the better for both of us.

I am an A-1 live-wire bond salesman and know the business from A to Z and then backward. You won't make any mistake if you hire me. My present employer doesn't want me to leave because he knows that he would have a hard time getting a man to fill my place.

I have no doubt that I can show you a number of ways to increase the

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efficiency of this work, because I have read several books on the subject.

A proper use of assertiveness is shown by the following illustrations. Note how the writer backs up his statements:

I know that I can sell space for your magazine. And here is how I know: For the past two years I have sold space for the Blank Magazine and I can show you at the interview that I have substantially increased my sales on every trip. Since both magazines are in approximately the same field, my success with one magazine surely ought to indicate that I shall be successful with yours.

With all due modesty, I wish to state that I am confident I can handle this work to your complete satisfaction. I am confident of this because I have been manager of a similar department at The Turner Company during the past three years.

Another point regarding the tone of your letter is that there are different types of employers, and, accordingly, your letter to be most effective should be adapted to the particular type to whom you are writing. A letter to a banking house, for example, should be conservative in attitude, for such a tone indicates that the applicant

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himself is conservative and, therefore, the kind of man desirable for bank work. The other extreme might be the letter in answer to an advertisement for a press agent or publicity man. Such a letter should be progressive, assertive, and highly original in tone. There is even a distinction in tone to be made between a letter applying for a position as salesman for an old, well-established, high-class, and conservative bond house, for instance, and a letter applying for a position as salesman for a progressive manufacturer of low-priced clothing.

No specific rules can be laid down and no specific advice given to apply to all cases. This general rule, however, can be stated: The letter should be adapted in tone to the prospective employer as far as you can establish the fact that he might have preferences for or prejudices against a certain tone. This selection of tone is chiefly a matter of judgment on your part, but please note carefully the fact that a good salesman, before calling on a prospective customer, attempts to find out as much as possible about him, such as his likes and dislikes, so that he won't do or say anything that may injure his chances of making a sale. Before writing your letter you, too, should try to find out as much as possible about the prospective employer.

Do not use an apologetic or a pleading tone

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in your letter. Such tones injure the effectiveness of the impression by making the reader feel that the applicant lacks ability, energy, and backbone. In the examples given below note what a weak impression the writers make:

I apologize for taking up your valuable time with this letter, but hope that you will consider me for any job now open in your company.

On account of the fact that my health is not very good, I wish to change from the hard work of the shipping department to some inside clerical job. Please give me a chance.

If you think I can fill the job, I shall be glad to try it.

The statement has been made that prospective employers are too critical and unsympathetic in examining applicants. In this connection it may be borne in mind that the employer is forced to adopt this critical attitude, for if he allowed his business judgment to be swayed by sympathy to prospective employees he would soon have his factory or office full of cripples and defectives of all sorts. How long could such an employer remain in business? When you spend your hard-earned money for things, you want the best and most you can get for it, don't you? And so with the employer. He

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knows that the success of his business depends upon having good, capable men in his employ, and he cannot afford to spend his money, or the money of the stockholders of his company, for inefficient workers. He must get the best workers he can for the money, or go out of business. One of the reasons why B. Altman, the late president of B. Altman & Co., of New York, was able to develop such a tremendously successful business was that for many years he personally selected his employees. It was Charles Schwab who said, in effect: "Take away or destroy my buildings and machinery, but leave me my organization, and within six months I will have another Bethlehem Steel Corporation." He, like other employers, realized the value of having good men around him. It is for these reasons, therefore, that the employer cannot afford to be sympathetic and that a pleading letter hurts the chances of the applicant.

Meeting Unexpressed Objections

In reading letters of application, the employer often comes upon certain statements, or lack of statements, that create objections in his mind to the applicant. If these objections are not foreseen and met by the applicant the employer is very likely to pass over such applications.

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One of the most common instances occurs in the letter of an applicant who says that he is "at present out of work." The thought immediately springs into the employer's mind that there must be some discreditable reason for his being unemployed, for good men are usually not out of work. Perhaps he was discharged for inefficiency, or for some other shortcoming that makes him an undesirable employee. If these doubts are not dispelled in some way in the letter, the employer is very likely to disregard the application. For this reason the applicant should tell why he is unemployed. The following examples illustrate the point:

On account of the fact that I have just moved to Chicago in search of larger opportunities than were offered in Peoria, my former home, I have not as yet made any business connection. My former employer, Mr. F. S. Murchison, manager of the credit and collection department of Roscott & Co., wholesale hardware, will tell you that I talked over with him the advisability of seeking greater opportunities in a larger city.

Until two weeks ago I was employed as a ledger clerk at Williams & Browning, exporters. At that time, I and four other men were told that the present conditions in the export

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field, as a result of the war, were such that it was not possible for them to retain our services.

About ten days ago I resigned my position as junior accountant because of a personal disagreement between my superior, Mr. George L. Borchardt, and myself. He did not wish me to leave, but I felt it would be to the best interests of both of us to do so. When I handed in my resignation he told me that I could use his name as a reference.

If the applicant has been discharged from his latest position, whether on account of his own fault or not, it is usually inadvisable either to mention the fact in the letter or to attempt to give details to prove that the action was unjustified. It is unwise to say that one was discharged, because such a statement may cause the prospective employer to drop further consideration of that application. Moreover, no matter how unjustified in the mind of the applicant was his discharge, the details of the matter are of little interest to the prospective employer. The discussion is better left to the interview.

One danger in the above plan is that the prospective employer, before granting the interview, may make inquiries and receive in reply a bad report. As a rule, however, inquiries

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are not made until after the personal interview, and if the applicant is selected for a personal interview such is the better time to go into the explanation. In this connection it is well to note that nothing should be said that could be construed as an attack upon the previous employer. It is better not to criticize him or his method of doing business, in any way. Employers do not like a man who is too ready to criticize others. Such men breed discontent among other workers and are known as "trouble makers."

The applicant who is already employed has a much better chance, as a rule, to secure a job than has the unemployed applicant. There are two reasons for this: (1) A man who is employed unconsciously puts into his letter a tone of confidence that is often lacking in the letter of the unemployed candidate. Since he has a job and since the necessity of getting a job does not press him, he does not appear to be so anxious to get it. Such an attitude impresses the reader with the fact that this applicant is confident that he can do the work and that he is not over-anxious about securing the position. There is usually something suspicious about the seller who is too anxious to sell an article. (2) The fact that this applicant has a job indicates to the prospective employer that he is giving sat-

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isfaction where he is and that, therefore, he is probably all right.

Despite these advantages, the applicant who is already in a job should always try to meet the question that might arise in the employer's mind—i. e., "Why does he want to leave his present job? Has he been asked to seek another place?" *Failure to give a good reason for desiring to leave his present position sometimes injures the applicant's chances.* The examples given below indicate how such a question may be properly met:

Although I have a good position at my present place of business, I realize that the opportunities are not great because the company is small and conservative.

My chief reason for desiring to make a change from my present position is that I have known your concern by reputation for a number of years and have always desired to become connected with it.

Although my present employer has shown his satisfaction in my services by giving me two raises in the past year, my knowledge of the business causes me to believe that it cannot afford a much higher salary than I am getting now.

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I am at present the bookkeeper of this company. But since I am planning to make accountancy my life work, I realize that I can get the necessary opportunities only with a firm of accountants such as you are.

Negative and unpleasantly suggestive reasons are worse than no reasons at all. Such reasons as the following are not helpful:

I desire to make a change from my present position because my employer has not lived up to his promise to give me a larger salary on the first of the year.

As my employer is always criticizing the way I do my work, I want to leave the job I am now holding.

My reason for changing positions is that I find that I don't care for the kind of work I am doing.

Even though the reasons given above were the real causes that impelled the applicants to seek other positions, they could have been expressed in such a way that they would not have created a negative reaction on the prospective employers; for instance, the last example given above might be altered to read somewhat as follows: "My reason for desiring to

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change from my present position is that I wish to get into the kind of work that you offer."

Unfortunate or Disagreeable Suggestions

In writing the letter of application one should be especially careful to avoid saying anything that may contain an unfortunate or disagreeable suggestion. For example, the following sentence is bad because of the suggestion in it: "My present employer will be *only too glad* to give me a good recommendation." This sentence may be taken to mean that the present employer wishes to have the employee leave, and to get him to leave he will be "only too glad" to write a good recommendation.

Notice this sentence: "I was *discharged* from my last place because the concern I was working for went out of business." The expression "was discharged" might easily make an unfavorable impression on the prospective employer despite the rest of the sentence which indicates that the man was not "discharged," but, rather, lost his position because his employer went out of business. It would have been much better to have written: "When my last employer realized that conditions were unfavorable in the woolen business he decided to close down until better opportunities came. I was, therefore, left free to look for another position."

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The Question of Salary

Whenever it is possible to do so, it is advisable to postpone the question of salary until the interview, for at that time you will have more opportunity to make out a case for what you want. *The proper time to talk about salary is after you feel that the prospective employer wants to hire you.* If he doesn't want you, there is no use in discussing salary.

In some advertisements, however, the applicant is asked to state the salary expected. And the following troublesome question arises in the mind of the applicant: "If I mention the salary I expect, it may be higher than he wants to pay; and, as a result, I may not be considered. What should I say?" Note how the situation is handled in the instances given below:

I am willing to leave the matter of salary to you. I am more interested in the opportunities that the position may have.

My present salary is \$24. I am willing, however, that the whole question of salary be left to you after you have interviewed me.

I am at present receiving a salary of \$45 a week. Opportunities, however, are more important to me than

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salary. Accordingly, it might be well to leave the question of salary aside until you have been able at a personal interview to judge of my qualifications in more detail.

In all of these instances the salary question is left open and the employer impressed with the fact that the applicant is not seeking another position just to get a higher salary. An applicant who appears to be too much interested in how much he is going to get does not make a favorable impression on the employer.

Even though the salary the applicant is already receiving is somewhat higher than the employer expects to pay, yet the latter may appreciate the fact that the applicant must be worth it or he wouldn't be getting it and, accordingly, he will try to meet it. The question is, therefore, better left to the interview when the whole matter can be threshed out.

Mentioning Name of Present Employer

If you are already employed, but are seeking a different or better position by means of letters of application, the question arises as to whether or not it is wise to mention the name of your present employer in your letter. An applicant often fears that the prospective employer may write to the present employer for reference pur-

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poses, with the result that the applicant may be thereby embarrassed.

If you wish to safeguard yourself against such an occurrence, it is possible to do so by writing as follows:

I am at present working for a well-known silk manufacturer, whose name, for obvious reasons, I wish to withhold until the personal interview with you. I know, however, that my immediate superior will give me a good recommendation.

But in cases in which the name of the prospective employer appears in the advertisement, and in the writing of unsolicited letters of application, it is usually preferable to give the name of the present employer, for your letter thereby will be made more definite. By giving the name of your present employer you will help the prospective employer to decide whether or not your experience with him is such as to make you a desirable employee. To be able to say that you have been employed for a year or two by a concern well known for its efficiency is certainly in your favor.

As a rule there is little fear that the prospective employer will inquire of your present employer because he will realize how such an inquiry would embarrass you. But if you

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desire to guard against any possibility of his inquiring, you may write somewhat as follows:

I am at present employed as traffic manager of the Maxwell Woolen Company. To save possible embarrassment, I wish to ask that no inquiry be made until you feel certain that my qualifications satisfy you. I can assure you that I can then procure a satisfactory recommendation from my immediate superior in my present company.

VI

UNSOLICITED LETTERS OF APPLICATION

"The successful man of to-day is he who knows how to do one thing better than most other men can do it."—EDWARD BOK.

What an Unsolicited Letter Is

ONE of the most effective means of securing a position is the unsolicited letter of application—*i. e.*, an application that is not solicited by an advertisement or other means. For example: suppose that you realized that it would be to your advantage to get a job with a certain rapidly growing trust company. You have seen no advertisements of positions open with that company; yet you determine to apply by letter for a position with them.

This means of securing a position is effective chiefly because of the fact that comparatively little competition is met—at least not nearly so much competition is met as occurs in applying for a position that is advertised. An unsolicited letter of application is usually given

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attention and a reading, because it seldom happens that more than one or two of such letters are received in any one mail.

The Advantages of the Unsolicited Letter of Application

Another big advantage of the unsolicited letter of application is that it is by this means that an applicant can pick and choose his prospective employer. As you know, most advertisements of positions open do not give the name of the advertiser, with the result that the applicant cannot tell until after the interview whether the concern advertising can offer him the opportunities he wishes. Although good jobs can be secured through the "want" columns, yet it is more or less a hit-or-miss affair.

At this point the questions arise, "What are the chances of securing a job by this method?" and: "If the companies I am going to solicit for a job need men, why don't they advertise? Since they aren't advertising for men, do they need any?" Both of these questions can be answered together.

In answer to the first question it can be said that the chances of getting a position by this method are better than by answering advertisements. There are a number of facts, however, that you should consider along with the

1804 Marion Building
Cleveland, Ohio
February 17, 1932

Harmon Tractor Co.,
Columbus, Ohio.

Gentlemen:

Recently I had the pleasure of viewing a demonstration of your tractor given on a farm near Cleveland. I was so impressed by the effectiveness of the machine that, after a careful consideration of the opportunities offered by your tractor, I desire to seek a connection with your company in the capacity of a sales or advertising executive.

At present I am sales manager of a 48-year-old manufacturing company with which I have been connected since 1914. During this period I have increased sales from \$480,000 to more than \$1,000,000 annually, in a line showing no increased consumption brought about by war conditions.

I direct eighteen domestic and three foreign salesmen, handle the more important correspondence with 2200 dealers, write trade paper and direct-by-mail advertising and supervise a clerical force of twenty-one persons.

Previously I was for two years advertising manager and assistant sales manager of the Blunk Company, Cleveland. There I assisted in the direction of over 100 specialty salesmen, edited a house organ, and prepared the advertising.

Several years on the road for the Blunk Sales Company, Cleveland, selling vacuum cleaners to electrical dealers, contractors, department stores, and householders has given me the familiarity with the salesman's problems and the dealer's viewpoint, so essential to success as a sales executive.

Having grown to manhood on a farm, I have considerable knowledge of farm machinery, of the people who buy it, and the dealers who sell it. Because I know the methods that would sell a tractor to my father, or one of my uncles who is a farmer, I can quickly show results in promoting the sale of your tractors.

I am 32 years old, married, and have two children. I am making good in my present position and can retain it indefinitely. I am so impressed by the possibilities in the tractor field, however, that I wish to get into it.

An expression of interest will bring to you a portfolio containing samples of my work, the names of references who will vouch for my character and past achievements, and any other information you may desire.

May I submit these proofs of my fitness?

Respectfully yours,

Ernest E. Randolph

AN EXAMPLE OF AN UNSOLICITED LETTER OF APPLICATION

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statement just made. In the first place, remember that the kind of job you want may be advertised only infrequently. Just because the special kind of job one wants is not advertised, should one wait patiently until it is, or should one go out to find it in another way?

Many men who have consulted me with respect to how to get a job have informed me that they had not been able to apply for the job they wanted because they hadn't come across any advertisements of such jobs. I have then told these men first to draw up a list of the names of good companies that they knew had the kind of work they desired, and then to send to each company the best letter of application they knew how to write. In only rare and special cases has a man, after he had faithfully and persistently worked on this scheme up to the limit of a month, failed to get results.

Some time ago a young man came to my office who very much desired to get a position in an importer's office where he could learn the importing business. He had been able to find only a few advertisements that specifically stated that a man was wanted *in an importer's office* to do the kind of work he was capable of doing. Since he was working, he could not very well take time off to interview importers. Yet, following out the plan of canvassing the possibilities

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and then writing unsolicited letters of application, this man, after he had mailed out twenty-five letters in one batch, received the astounding number of twenty-three requests to call for an interview. After waiting for several months for an advertisement to appear of the job he wanted, he had been able, by means of unsolicited letters of application, to secure within three days' time these twenty-three requests to call. The jobs had been there all the time! The trouble had been that he had waited for the jobs to come to him; he hadn't gone after the jobs. An added advantage of the unsolicited letter of application is, therefore, that it is of assistance in getting a job quickly.

What has just been recounted is a part answer to the second question set forth above. In further answer, it is well to consider these statements: Many, and probably the majority, of the good companies do not advertise for men, except in rare cases. Yet how do they get the men to fill the jobs that must be filled? Where do they get their new men from? In reply it can be said that most of them rely on applications—both in person and by letter—of men who wish to become connected with them. If no job is open at the moment, the application is filed, and later when there is a need for a man to do a certain type of work the applications for

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such a job are reviewed and the candidates notified. Moreover, do not overlook the fact that a place can always be made for a good man. Indeed, if a good man applies for a position and there is none open, the concern will often either try to find a definite place in the organization for him or will hire him and let him find his own place. Good men are too rare to be allowed to escape.

A further advantage of the unsolicited letter of application is that through its use it is possible to secure several offers for your services. If an applicant has been successful in applying for a position advertised and has had the job offered to him, he must take it or leave it. But in the case of the unsolicited letters of which, for example, an applicant may have sent out fifteen at one time, he may as a result secure the great advantage of being able to consider, say, four different offers and to pick the one that presents the best opportunities.

Of course, both the letter of application for a position advertised and the unsolicited letter of application offer the convenience to a man who is employed to seek other employment without taking off time to make personal calls in search of a better job.

Comparatively speaking, few positions paying more than twenty-five hundred dollars are adver-

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tised. Hence an applicant for a high-salaried job must rely to a great extent upon unsolicited letters of application in seeking a position.

As you have now seen, the unsolicited letter of application has many advantages that are of great assistance in helping one to get the job one wants. And because of these advantages, this method of securing a better job should never be overlooked whenever a better job is being sought. If you are seeking to sell your services for the *best* opportunities that you can get, you should leave no stone unturned. All methods should be used so that you might have the advantage of being able to choose from a number of chances—and one of the most effective methods is the use of the unsolicited letter of application.

Choosing the List

Success in the use of the unsolicited letter of application depends largely upon your judgment and ingenuity in making up a list of prospective employers to whom you will send your letters. If you have decided that you desire to stay in the same kind of business in which you are at present employed, you should not have much difficulty in ascertaining the names of concerns in the same field that can offer you the desired opportunities. Naturally, the more you know about these concerns the better able are you to

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make a good selection. If you do not happen to have information concerning the opportunities for advancement in these companies it might be advisable to talk with persons who are in a position to know.

If, on the other hand, you are planning to make a change from one field of business to another, you may know very little about the standing of the companies in the new field. Suppose, for instance, that you are at present working as a correspondent in the credit department of a large retail store and you have decided that there are more opportunities in the credit department of a bank. Now, although you are well acquainted with the standing of other retail stores, you may know little or nothing of the relative opportunities existing in the various banks. To secure this information you need to find some one who does, so that you can make use of his knowledge on the matter.

Whenever it is possible to do so, it is advisable to secure the name of the person who may be interested in your application. A letter of application addressed to some individual in the company has a better chance of success than a letter addressed to the company itself. In the first instance, since the individual addressed is in closer touch with conditions of his own department than is the employment manager of the

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company, he may be able to find a place for an applicant who impresses him with his ability, although no such place would have been listed with the employment manager. With a little ingenuity, the name of the individual to be addressed can be secured. One means is to telephone to the company in which he is employed and ask the private board exchange operator to give you his name. For example, you may be trying to secure a position in the collection department of a large retail concern. Telephone to that concern and ask for the name of the collection manager.

Unless you have decided to make a determined effort to get placed with one of two or three concerns that you especially desire to go with, it is wise to make your list of prospective employers as complete as possible. Make a thorough canvass of the possibilities so that your campaign to land a better job will be a complete one. The next step is to send letters of application to those on your list. In this connection it is well to note that there are two methods of sending out letters: you can write and send only one letter at a time, or you can write and send your letters in batches of ten or fifteen. The latter method is usually more effective from your point of view, because you may secure four or five offers from which you

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can pick and choose; if the former method is used you will receive only one offer at a time, an offer which you must either accept or reject, with no chance of comparing it with other offers.

At the convention of the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World, held in 1920 at Indianapolis, Indiana, a woman who was employed in the advertising department of a Cleveland concern used a rather ingenious plan to secure a position with an advertising agency in New York City. Here was her scheme: From the convention bulletin she first secured the names and hotel room numbers of all representatives of New York City agencies who were attending the convention. Then she sent to each of these a letter of application for a position. The novelty of receiving a letter of this kind at a convention favorably impressed the recipients with the ingenuity and cleverness of this woman's plan. Here is her letter, with names changed:

June 7, 1920.

Mr. George Andrews,
Room 632, Claypool Hotel,
Indianapolis, Ind.

Dear Sir:

An organization like yours is usually glad to know of well-trained

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advertising writers whose services are available.

Personal circumstances make it necessary for me to leave Cleveland and return to New York. I am, therefore, interested in talking over my work with people like yourself who may have, either at present or in the near future, an opening for a writer of my training.

I have had wide experience in writing and producing both retail and national copy on many subjects; I also edit a dealers' house organ.

The Blank display here at the convention is mostly my work. I should greatly appreciate an interview with you to show you this work and hear any suggestions you may have to give me.

Thank you.

Since I was attending this convention, I received one of her letters. I was so struck by her initiative that some time later, after my return to New York City, I wrote to her and asked her to let me know whether she had been successful. Here is part of her reply, with names changed:

"You will be interested to know that the letter in question was held up two days because, after I mailed it, I found that the young lady

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who typed it had used a plural for a singular. I went to the post office, recalled the letters, and had them done over, and even then they did not please me. Of course you do not know that my 'hobby' is writing an application letter that will pull the job. I might add that I have never applied for a position yet, that it was not offered to me. In most cases this was probably due to the extreme care I took with the letter, rather than to any special ability on my part.

"I received answers to practically all of fifty letters I sent out. (On nearly all of them I added a little personal note.) None of them offered me a position outright, but all asked me to call in person as soon as I arrived. This gave me entrée to new acquaintances and got my friends talking about my returning to New York. After I did arrive, I was offered two positions from the list I addressed, and three others said they would have something interesting next spring.

"This present position came about through a personal call I made here at the Blank office. During the conversation something was said about making Blank's women's styles more talked about instead of letting people think that Blank stood only for raincoats. I listened and then went and looked up some trade-paper copy for Blank.

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"A few days later, I must admit half in fun, I wrote Mr. Blank, telling why, in my opinion, dealers did not wake up to the fact that they were losing some wonderful styles by buying only raincoats of Blank. Immediately I received a call to come to the Brooklyn office. When I came out I had been offered the position of advertising manager of the women's section—a position not before in existence."

Writing the Letter

The unsolicited letter of application differs from the letter replying to an advertisement in the following minor matters: the opening paragraph, the statement of qualifications, and the adaptation to the reader. These points will be considered in detail in the paragraphs that follow.

Unlike the letter replying to an advertisement, the unsolicited letter does not, of course, begin with a reference to the fact that the applicant is applying for a position that was advertised. But originality in beginning the unsolicited letter is just as important as it is in the letter replying to an advertisement. Such beginnings as the following should not be used:

Thinking that you might be in need of a correspondent, I am writing you this letter.

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Having heard that you can make use of an assistant credit manager, I wish to apply for the position.

Believing that you may be able to find a place for me in your accounting department, I am submitting herewith my letter of application.

As I have been given to understand that you frequently need men in your traffic department, I trust that you will give consideration to this application.

Such beginnings as the following are likely to be more effective:

If you are in need of an experienced and efficient correspondent for your general correspondence department, the following description of my qualifications may help you to decide that I should be considered for the position.

At a recent meeting of the Credit Men's Association, R. F. Morton, credit manager of C. S. Goodhue & Co., said that one of the essential characteristics of a good credit man is judgment. In requesting you to consider my application for a position in the credit department of your company, I wish to present evidence showing that I possess judgment.

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I have often heard it said that your company has one of the best organized accounting departments in Boston. Because of this, I am naturally very desirous of learning whether you can find a place for another good man.

For the past two years I have been acting as assistant to the manager of the traffic department of a well-known manufacturing concern. Although I like my present position, I am looking for bigger opportunities with a larger company. Hence my reason for applying to you for a position in your traffic department.

In view of the fact that the concern to which you are applying has not advertised the position you are seeking, you have no reason to know exactly what qualifications are required. These you must outline for yourself according to your own judgment before you start to write your letter. Naturally, the description of such general qualifications as your education and experience should be presented. In addition you should present whatever special qualifications you have that will make you a desirable employee for this particular job. To do this it may be of help to try to place yourself in the employer's place, and then ask yourself this question: "If I were the employer, what special qualifications should I like to find in applicants for this job?"

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A little careful thinking on your part concerning an answer to this question may help you to select from among your qualifications certain ones that should be emphasized and described in detail—a thing that otherwise you might not do. This opportunity to “size up” the concern to which you are sending your letter of application, permits you more closely to fit your qualifications to its probable needs and desires.

Another advantage of the unsolicited letter is that the writer is able to adapt himself and his letter to the known character of the concern to which he is writing. For example, if he is applying for a position as a correspondent in the adjustment department of a *high-class, conservative* retail store, he should have such characteristics of the prospective employer in mind while he is composing his letter, so that whatever he says and the manner in which he says it will harmonize with those characteristics.

Follow-up Letters

Since an unsolicited letter of application is generally considered by the recipient to be personal to him and, therefore, requiring a reply, he will usually acknowledge its receipt even though he is unable to find a position for the applicant. If the prospective employer does reply, another opportunity is given to the appli-

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cant to impress the prospective employer. For illustration, let us assume that a prospective employer, in reply to an unsolicited letter, answered as follows:

Dear Sir:

I wish to acknowledge your letter of application of October 24. At present we have no vacancies of the type you desire. I am, however, placing your application on file.

Very truly yours,

If you are especially desirous of securing a position with this concern, it might be advisable to reply somewhat as follows:

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your courtesy in acknowledging my letter of application for a position as accountant in your department.

Although I am already employed, I certainly should very much like to work for you and I hope that you will keep me in mind in case a vacancy occurs.

Respectfully yours,

Such a letter as that given above is very likely to create a favorable impression upon the pros-

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pective employer because he seldom receives a letter of this type. It also serves the purpose of having him keep you in mind. Moreover, it sometimes happens that if the prospective employer is deeply impressed by the applicant's letter, he will put himself out to find whether or not there isn't some job that the applicant can fill even though it is not exactly the job the applicant applied for.

Unsolicited letters of application are oftentimes referred to the employment manager of the company. In this case it is a matter of routine on the part of his office to file the application, if no vacancy exists, so that if one should occur the applications for such a type of job can be consulted. And that is a good point to bear in mind. Most of the larger and well-known companies seldom advertise for employees, because they usually have a number of applications already on file. Accordingly, even though you may be unable to secure a position immediately with a concern with which you desire to become connected, you should not give up hope. But it is a good plan to remind the employment manager from time to time of the fact that you still desire a position with his company. Such a reminder, sent every two or three weeks, serves to keep your name and application fresh in his mind, and, furthermore, indicates

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that you are persistent and really want to work for his concern. An example of such a letter follows:

Dear Sir:

About three weeks ago I applied by letter for a position as accountant in your export department. You very courteously informed me that there was no vacancy then, but that you were placing my application on file.

Without desiring to appear presumptuous, may I ask whether there is any vacancy now? By referring to my letter of application (copy inclosed) you will find, I believe, that I have the qualifications for the place and that I will make a good, hard worker for you.

I have such a high regard for your concern that I should like very much to join your staff.

If no vacancy exists at present, won't you please keep me in mind for the next one that occurs?

Respectfully yours,

Certainly, if a man already has a position, but realizes the opportunities and advantages offered by a position with another concern, it is going to

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pay him not to take as final the statement that "no vacancy exists here at present." He can afford to wait patiently until one does arise, but he should have backbone and persistence enough to keep after that job. Often persistency alone will convince the employer or employment manager that the applicant should be given the position.

VII

ADVERTISING FOR A POSITION

"As a rule the most successful man in life is the man who has the most information."—DISRAELI.

The Value of Advertising

ALTHOUGH advertising for a position is usually not so productive of results as are the letter answering advertisements and the unsolicited letter, yet it is a means that should not be overlooked by one who is making a determined and thorough campaign to land a good job.

Good jobs have been secured through advertising, but in general, unless one has certain special qualifications that demand that he bring himself and his qualifications to the attention of a large number of readers in the hope that one of them may be looking for just such a man as he is, or unless one is unable to secure a list of prospective employers to whom he may write, advertising must take second place to other methods of getting a job. It is only natural that an employer, before consulting the "Positions Wanted" columns of a newspaper, would

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give consideration to any unsolicited letters of application that he may have received and to applications that he may have on file.

It is well to note, however, that a distinction should be made between advertising in such a general medium as the newspaper and advertising in such a specialized medium as a trade publication or technical or professional journal such as *Drug Topics*, *Iron Age*, and the *Journal of Accountancy*. Advertising for a position in the latter kind of medium is certainly a good method to use, for it brings one's qualifications to the attention of just the class of readers who could make use of such services.

For example: a man who has had experience as a copy writer in an advertising agency and who desires to secure a better position in a similar capacity, would do well to consider the advisability of advertising for a position in *Printers' Ink*, a business publication that has a large circulation among men interested in advertising. His advertisement there would probably have a better chance to secure results than if it were placed in the classified columns of a newspaper where it is not likely to be seen by the men he is trying to interest.

Or again: a man who has secured a specialized training in the credit department of a textile house, and who is seeking a similar position with

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another company, may find it advisable to advertise in such a publication as the *Dry Goods Economist*. Employers who are seeking such a man are more likely to look at the advertisements in their business publication than in their daily newspaper.

The two examples given above further illustrate the fact that *success in securing the right job depends to a large degree upon offering one's services for sale in the most likely market place.*

Writing the Advertisement

In order to write a good advertisement for a position, you should first consider the class of prospective employers to whom you are going to appeal, and then you should direct your advertisement at them. You should put yourself in the place of the prospective employer and try to find out what he would like to know about an applicant and what qualifications he would desire an employee in this job to have. These qualifications should then be brought out in your advertisement, as will be shown in the following paragraphs.

Consider the following advertisement:

STENOGRAPHER-secretary; experienced, competent and reliable, educated, best references, desires position. G 246, Journal.

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You will notice that it is very general and gives the reader or prospective employer little, if any, information from which he can form an opinion of the applicant's ability or qualifications. The person advertising says that he is experienced, but does not tell what his experience has been; he says that he is educated, but does not tell what his education has been; nor does he give his age. In fact, his advertisement is so general, ordinary, and commonplace that it is practically worthless. Note how much more specific is the advertisement given below. Of course it cost a few cents more, but it certainly has a better chance of creating desire—and, what is of most importance, of getting results:

STENOGRAPHER - secretary; 30; six years' experience in high-class business; has had complete charge of private office and handled all confidential work; two years college; realizes value of accuracy and dependableness; references. F 125, Times, Downtown.

Compare, also, the following pairs of advertisements and notice the differences:

BOOKKEEPER; competent; wishes situation as head bookkeeper. Address J. C. T., 241 Northern Ave.

BOOKKEEPER; 28; three years' experience, double entry, controlling accounts,

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statements; at present in full charge of books of large wholesale house; desires similar position; energetic and active, sees that work is done quickly and accurately; references. Box 215, Herald.

ACCOUNTANT desires connection with reputable concern where ability and intellect are recognized; excellent references. M 219, Tribune.

ACCOUNTANT; senior; 28; four years' experience in public accounting with C. P. A. firm; has first-class knowledge of bookkeeping systems, weekly and monthly audits, preparation of statements, etc.; good systematizer; energetic worker; desires position as assistant controller of large concern; references from present employer. A 24, Examiner.

The advertisement given below is another good example:

OFFICE MANAGER; 31; college graduate, well trained in executive work, thoroughly familiar with methods of office routine and system; two years' experience in this work; good systematizer and able to handle workers to get results; record and references of the best. Box T42, Sun.

The Size of the Advertisement

Whenever an employer is seeking an employee and turns to the want columns of his newspaper

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or business publication to search for him, he usually has in mind some definite job that he is trying to fill. If he wants an accountant, he will read the application-advertisements of the accountants; if he wants a salesman, he will read those of the salesmen. In view of this fact, therefore, the small two- or three-line advertisement has practically the same chance of being read as the large ten-line advertisement.

It is true, however, that the large advertisement has certain advantages over the small one. In the first place, the large advertisement, on account of its size, may get a priority of attention; that is, it may be read before the other and smaller advertisements for the same kind of position are read. This is an advantage, especially in case the other advertisements are numerous, for, since the large advertisement can hardly escape the attention of the reader, it will practically insure that the man who used it will at least be among those granted interviews.

It may be well to note that it is the practice of some newspapers and business publications to arrange the advertisements for positions in alphabetical order, the first word in the body of the advertisement determining. For example: all advertisements for positions as salesmen

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would be grouped, but the advertisement beginning "Salesman—Active and energetic young man . . . " would be placed ahead of "Salesman—Energetic and active young man . . . " Hence, in writing your advertisement for insertion in such publications it is wise to have the first word begin with the letter "A." This strategy will cause your advertisement to be placed at the top, or near the top, of your group, with the result that it will be seen and read first.

In the second place, the large advertisement will permit one to give more details than his competitors do.

In the third place, the large advertisement adds a sort of prestige to the advertiser and tends to indicate that he is a high-class man.

The increased expense for large space is more than offset by the better results. Isn't it better to spend, say, three and a half dollars on a large advertisement that is practically certain to bring inquiries than to spend thirty-five cents on a small advertisement that may not?

Reproduced on the following page is a section of a column of the classified section of a newspaper. Notice how the large advertisement stands out.

Another advantage of the large advertisement is that it will bring more inquiries than the small

graduate from Physical Institute at Naval Academy; understands making in addition to swimming and boating. D 180 Times.

PORTER, colored; all around useful; elevator. James, 2,144 5th. Av. Phone Harlem 2387.

PRIVATE SECRETARY, at present employed, wishes to change. E 85 Times.

PROMOTION manager of one of greatest American magazines desires similar connection where results are appreciated. E 45 Times.

PURCHASING AGENT.

Are you interested in a man who is expert in the purchase of printing, engraving, lithographing, stationery and office supplies and equipment of all kinds—

Who can establish standards for such commodities and systematize their purchase and distribution through the establishment of a system of regulations, minimum and maximum stocks, and of ordering definite quantities based on monthly consumptions—

Who is not only familiar with the proper administration of purchasing routine, but with its creation—

Who is an American, 33 years old, single, and who is seeking a connection compatible with his experience.

If so, further information can be obtained by addressing the undersigned. H 623 Times Downtown.

PURCHASING AGENT or assistant, experienced, desires connection with manufacturer in the East; has wide acquaintance with sources of supply, including steel market; keen executive ability; university training in corporation accounting, organization, and finance; would consider opening as assistant to executive. X 2036 Times Annex.

PURCHASING AGENT—FAMILIAR WITH CHEMICALS AND ALLIED LINES DESIRES POSITION, COLLEGE GRADUATE AND TRAINED ALONG TECHNICAL LINES, SOME EXPORT EXPERIENCE, BEST REFERENCES. H 615 TIMES DOWNTOWN.

PURCHASING AGENT—Young man, 7 years' experience machinery, hardware and mill supplies; capable executive. K 825 Times Downtown.

PURCHASING AGENT or assistant, 75 years' thorough experience with large corporations. K 866 Times Downtown.

PURCHASING AGENT, 37 years old, experience with shipyard buying. Address Purchasing, 810 Broad St., Newark, N. J.

PURCHASING Agent, capable buy for large manufacturing plant; can furnish best references; available immediately. K 402 Times.

REAL ESTATE—YOUNG MAN, 32, AMERICAN, EXPERIENCED AS RENTER, OVERSEER, COLLECTOR WISHES TO CONNECT WITH RELIABLE REAL ESTATE AGENT.

THE USE OF LARGE SPACE IN THE CLASSIFIED SECTION OF A NEWSPAPER

ADVERTISING FOR A POSITION

one and may thus give you the opportunity of being able to pick and choose from among the employers who write to you. This opportunity alone is worth the difference between the cost of the small and the cost of the large advertisement.

If a person who is looking for a high-salaried position can afford the expense, he will find it well, also, not to overlook the possibilities in display advertising used in a section of the newspaper or trade paper, other than the classified section. Such an advertisement may cost him three to seventy-five dollars, depending upon the size of the advertisement, its position, and the rates of the publication. Such advertisements attract the attention of a large number of those readers and prospective employers who seldom if ever read the classified sections and, accordingly, are usually productive of good results. Several of such advertisements are reproduced on the following page.

Selecting the Right Newspaper

The pulling power of your advertisement depends, to a large degree, upon your choice of the newspaper in which you insert it. Accordingly, it will pay you to consider carefully the respective merits of the newspapers published in your town or city. In selecting the

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Executive assistant, confidential or private secretary, qualified by long experience, splendid training and broad vision. Young native born American of refinement, Christian, desires a connection of broader scope and larger field. Unquestionable loyalty, integrity and credentials.
Box V 910 Times Downtown.

The services of a valuable man are available.

I am not Sales Manager, yet sales problems of any consequence are submitted to me before going into effect.

Invariably I answer important complaints, although my job is not to handle complaints.

Vital questions of credit and organization are usually referred to me.

When any situation arises that requires quick action and lots of it, together with tact and lots of that, I handle it.

Now Assistant to the President of a well known Corporation at New York, I seek a connection of greater opportunity.

Address B1036 Times Annex.

This Man

Has personality, ideas and ability backed by eight years successful experience.

Has been sales promotion manager, advertising manager of manufacturing concern and of publication.

Has ambition beyond what he can ever hope to realize in his present work.

If you need a man—and if, with you, these qualifications plus consistently resultful work mean BIG things for the future—write this man today.

Age, 30 Married
Present Salary, \$5,000

Address "H. C.," Box 92, care of
Printers' Ink

THE USE OF LARGE SPACE IN OTHER THAN THE CLASSIFIED SECTION

ADVERTISING FOR A POSITION

paper, answers to these two questions will help you:

1. Which paper is read by the employers you are trying to reach?
2. Which paper has the largest "Positions Wanted" or "Situations Wanted" section? (The paper that has the largest section is usually the one that has proved itself to be the most successful in getting inquiries for its advertisers.)

VIII

THE PERSONAL INTERVIEW

"I believe that the true road to pre-eminent success in any line is to make yourself master in that line."

—ANDREW CARNEGIE.

The Importance of the Interview

THE letter of application or the advertisement for a situation has successfully accomplished its purpose when it has secured a response requesting the applicant to call upon the prospective employer. The work of landing the job, however, is now only half done, for *the applicant has merely secured a hearing—a chance to show himself to the prospective employer and to convince him that he is the man for the place.*

Many applicants for positions, when they have received such requests to call, immediately think that they have already been selected for the job and that the personal interview is in the nature of a formality only, to which little or no importance is to be attached. Nothing could be farther from truth, for in all probability

THE PERSONAL INTERVIEW

no decision has yet been reached by the employer. It is vitally important, therefore, that the applicant should remember that the prospective employer bases his decision chiefly upon the impression made by the applicant at the interview.

Nor should the applicant at this stage of the game think that he is the only one being considered for the job. There may be, and there usually are, other candidates whom the prospective employer is considering. Just as it is of advantage to you to be able to pick and choose among a number of prospective employers, just so is it of advantage to a prospective employer to consider several candidates for a position. He is naturally trying to find the best man for the place and, accordingly, it is to his interests to interview at least four or five of the most promising of all the candidates so that he can select the best one. Since, therefore, your success in getting the job depends so much on the outcome of the personal interview, it is advisable to consider certain matters relating to the interview.

First of all, you should go prepared—that is, you should realize that *the interview is a kind of testing or judging process* by which the prospective employer will try to determine what your qualifications (your personality, experi-

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ence, ability, personal appearance, etc.) are, how they compare with the qualifications of other applicants, and whether they are sufficient for the position. And since the interview is a test, you should be prepared to show yourself to the best advantage.

Personal Appearance

There is little question of the fact that the average employer, in judging an applicant, relies chiefly upon the impressions made on him by the personal appearance of the applicant and by the way in which he handles himself. And even though the position to be filled is not one in which the employee needs to make a good personal appearance and to have a pleasant address as, for example, he would need if he were a salesman, yet most employers believe that they are able to form a correct opinion of an applicant's ability from seeing him and talking with him. In relatively few instances does an employer rely upon psychological tests or upon actual, practical demonstrations of the applicant's ability to do the work. The possibility of such tests being given should not, however, be overlooked, and for that reason it is best to be prepared for them. (These matters are discussed on pages 177 to 182.)

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How to Dress for the Interview

In order to make the best possible impression upon your prospective employer through the means of your personal appearance, you should, before going to the interview, consider the question of dress or clothing. You know that each detail of your clothing will probably come under the critical and judging eye of the employer, who will try to find out something about you in this way. If an applicant is careless and slovenly in the way he dresses, the employer cannot be blamed for thinking that he will be careless and slovenly in his work. Of course dress does not make the man, but it does make impressions—good or bad. The prospective employer doesn't know much about you and hence he is going to judge a great deal by the way you look. Clothes have much to do with the making of a favorable impression.

It is not at all necessary that your clothing be brand new—but it is essential that it be clean, well pressed, and neat-looking. Your shoes should be polished; your collar and cuffs unsoiled—in fact, every detail of your dress should be in good condition. To be perfectly frank about the matter I will say that many employers discount a Sunday-going-to-church appearance, because they know from experience

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that many applicants "dress up" for the interview. But these very same employers will criticize severely any carelessness or slovenliness in the dress of the applicant. Hence, to be on the safe side, an applicant should dress himself with care—but at the same time he should avoid having a dressed-up-for-the-occasion appearance.

In this same connection it may be well to note that your dress should be conservative, quiet, and businesslike. It is best not to choose to wear bright-colored neckties and socks; nor is it advisable to wear jewelry, such as scarfpins, rings, and large watch-chain ornaments. Some employers have personal prejudices against men who wear such things, and since you may not know what your prospective employer may think of them, it is a safer plan not to wear them, and thereby run no risk of injuring your chances. The same criticism holds good of soft collars, for there are some employers who think that it is not businesslike to wear them.

The dress of the applicant should be appropriate to the kind of position for which he is being interviewed. If he is applying for a position that pays four thousand dollars, his dress should be such as to help to make him look like a four-thousand-dollar man. If the position is that of bond salesman for a high-class bond

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house, the applicant should have in mind that it is especially desirable that his dress be of the very best he can afford—and oftentimes better than he can afford—for good dress is a big asset in such a business, and the employer knows it. Money spent in buying good clothing is considered by many salesmen as an investment.

Again, the employer in a first-class concern likes to see all his employees well dressed, according to the standard or reputation of his concern. Dress to him may be of more importance than to the employer of a middle-class company.

Attention ought also to be given by the applicant to such matters as having his finger nails well manicured, his hair trimmed and well brushed—in fact, everything about his personal appearance should radiate smartness, success, and prosperity.

How Women Should Dress

Women, in choosing suitable dress for the personal interview, should especially guard against an overdressed appearance. Many a woman applicant has spoiled her chances of securing the position because she was dressed more appropriately for a social function than for a business interview. If, instead of choosing to wear all her finery, she wears her customary

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business dress, she will make a better impression. The overuse of cosmetics and perfumes, moreover, is to be avoided. From experience, employers have found that women who overdress and who are concerned too much with their personal appearance do not make the best workers; hence they favor those women applicants who dress in a plain, businesslike fashion.

Being Prepared to Answer Questions

Although it is not advisable to memorize word for word what you are going to say to the prospective employer, it is well, however, to be prepared to answer questions that may be asked. An employer often asks these questions not so much to secure information, but rather to be able to judge your voice, your English, your quickness of thought, and so forth. The applicant who is totally unprepared for these questions many falter and hesitate, and thereby impress the employer with the fact that he is slow-witted, lacks confidence, etc. Some of the questions that cause trouble for the applicant are these:

1. Tell me all about yourself.
2. Why do you want to work for us?
3. Why do you think you can handle this position?
4. Have you any ideas on how to improve on this work?
5. Why did you leave your last job? [Or] Why do you want to leave your present job?

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Unless the applicant is prepared for them, he may become confused and make poor answers. Moreover, he may be compelled to say: "I don't know what you mean. Just what do you want to know?"—all of which does not help to create a good impression. On the other hand, if you are prepared you can answer the questions promptly and with confidence. Let us see how the five questions above are taken care of:

1. [*Tell me all about yourself.*] I was born in Watertown, New York, in 1890, and am now thirty-one years old. I went through both the grade school and the high school there. After I was graduated from the high school, where I specialized in bookkeeping and other commercial subjects, I worked as assistant bookkeeper and then bookkeeper for four years with Ackerson & Merrill, wholesale grocers, in that town. I then came to New York City and secured a position as bookkeeper with Maxwell, Borden & Co., wholesale grocers, at 150 Chambers Street. A year later I began a course in accounting, in the evening, at Pace & Pace, still keeping my job. In 1913 I was made head bookkeeper. In 1915 I secured a position as junior accountant with Neal & Slavens, C. P. A.s, of 24 Wall Street. I

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worked for them until June, 1917, when I enlisted in the navy as a chief yeoman. I was stationed at the D. & H. Aircraft Corporation at Elizabeth, New Jersey, where I had charge of the cost accounting for the navy. In June, 1918, I was promoted to the rank of ensign. I secured my release from active duty in June, 1919, and then went back to Neal & Slavens, where I am now working as senior accountant, specializing on cost work and systems.

2. [*Why do you want to work for us?*] I should like to go to work for you chiefly because I think that there is good opportunity here. I know a little about your reputation in business and believe that your concern is the best I could connect with. Since I am making cost accounting my specialty, I want to get with a company that is doing a good deal of that work. Moreover, although Neal & Slavens have always treated me in a fine way, yet they do not handle enough cost work to enable me to specialize in it.
3. [*Why do you think you can handle this position?*] I think I can handle this position because my training and experience in cost work and cost systems, both with Neal & Slavens and with the navy, have been sound and extensive. [Other details of the actual

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experience can be given to prove ability.] If you will inquire of Mr. R. I. Neal, and of Lieutenant-Commander George R. Moore, at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, I believe that they will tell you that I have done my work well. I like this kind of work and intend to keep on specializing in it.

4. [*Have you any ideas on how to improve on this work?*] Although I know something about how you carry on this work, I don't want to appear egotistical and say that I can improve on it. To indicate that I have the ability to find errors and correct faults in cost systems, I should like to tell you of one experience I had at the D. & H. Aircraft Corporation: [Details showing how the applicant improved on a system can be given here.]
5. [*Why do you want to leave your present job?*] Neal & Slavens are treating me in a very nice way. The only reason I have for looking for another position is that I want the opportunity to specialize more in cost accounting. Neal & Slavens don't do much of that kind of work. [Also, see page 124.]

Find out as much as you can about the employer, his business, products, etc. The more you know about these matters, the better able you will be to show him that you under-

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stand his problems and what he wants from you.

If you have letters of recommendation, samples of your work, or any other material that may be of assistance to you in convincing the prospective employer, be sure to take such material to the interview. The letter from the prospective employer appointing a time for the interview should always be taken along.

At the Interview

As a rule, an hour is set by the prospective employer for the interview. The applicant, accordingly, should take pains to be there on time. Lateness may easily mean the loss of all chance to secure the position.

Just before entering the office make sure that your clothing is all right. Then give your mind a little toning up by saying to yourself such things as these: "I am going to get this job. I'm not going to be timid or bashful in meeting him and talking to him. I am going to impress him in a businesslike way with the fact that I am confident both of myself and of my ability to do the work." Then, with your head up and your shoulders squared back, go in.

If the appointment is at the office of the prospective employer, you may be met by the office boy or by the secretary. If this happens you

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should not say, "I want to see Mr. —," but, rather, "I have an appointment to see Mr. —. My name is —." The latter method of announcing that you are there will secure better attention for you. If you are then asked to state your business, present the letter that requested you to come for an interview.

When you are ushered into Mr. —'s presence you should not try to shake hands unless he first offers his hand. If he does offer his hand, be ready to take it—that is, don't have your hat or gloves in your right hand, nor your overcoat over your right arm. And let your handshake be a hearty one—not too hard nor yet too soft. Look the employer squarely in the eye, neither avoiding his gaze nor staring at him. Remain standing until he has asked you to be seated.

Don't place your hat on his desk or attempt any familiarity. Adopt a respectful, courteous attitude without any suggestion of cringing. If he waits for you to begin the interview, you might start by saying that you have come to see him in compliance with his request. You might then present his letter to you, for he may need to have his mind refreshed on the matter. If he now begins to ask you questions, all well and good; but if he is apparently desirous that you should go ahead and try "to sell yourself" to

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him, be prepared to do so. In fact, if you are applying for a position as a salesman, the prospective employer might well begin the interview by saying, "You want a job as salesman with us. Well, let me see you sell yourself to me." In this case, begin with a description of your education and then give details about your experience, why you think you can show results, etc.

In talking about your education, training, and experience try to show the prospective employer how each of them helped to develop your fitness for the job. Omit all irrelevant material. You are trying to prove that you are the best man for *this particular job*.

Don't try to do all the talking, but when you are asked a question, answer it fully. Talk naturally and distinctly.

Don't argue with or contradict him. Be courteous, diplomatic, and tactful. Don't be egotistical or overconfident. Such attitudes of mind make unfavorable impressions. Be earnest and convincing.

The Question of Salary

The question of salary usually comes up for discussion at the interview. If the salary for the position is not a fixed one, the prospective employer may ask, "What salary do you expect?"

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In replying to it, you should be careful of what you say, for this question can cause trouble. It is not wise, for example, to say, bluntly, "I want twenty-five hundred dollars" [or whatever the amount is]. It is much better to say something like this: "I don't care so much about the salary as I do about the opportunities; so I haven't given the salary question much thought. I believe, however, that I ought to be worth about twenty-five hundred dollars a year to you." It is usually better to name a salary slightly in excess of what you really expect. It is much easier to come down on the salary amount than to go up on it. If the prospective employer says that twenty-five hundred dollars is much more than he desires to pay, you should be prepared to tell him why you think you are worth it. For example, you might say, "I am getting twenty-two hundred dollars in my present place and am expecting an increase shortly." If the prospective employer still thinks that twenty-five hundred dollars is too high, and if you care a great deal for the opportunities the position offers, you might express yourself somewhat as follows: "I really believe I could prove that I shall be worth twenty-five hundred dollars to you. But, as I said, the opportunities in the job appeal to me. May I ask what salary you had in mind?" In this way a compromise can often be made. Of

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course, the success of the applicant to secure the salary he had set his mind on depends largely upon his personal ability in bargaining with the prospective employer.

Closing the Interview

After the prospective employer has asked his last question and you have answered it, he may show you that he is concluding the interview by saying: "I have yet to interview two other candidates for this job. I shall let you know the outcome in three or four days." The applicant should not become discouraged at this and, perhaps, show his disappointment, for such a situation of affairs is the natural thing. Leave the prospective employer with a pleasant impression of you and your manners by saying something like the following: "I certainly am glad to have met you and hope that you may decide in my favor."

When you see that the prospective employer wants to end the interview, don't take up his time further by continuing to urge your services upon him. It often harms your case to do so. Moreover, it is folly to persist in the attempt to get a position when the prospective employer shows clearly that he has an objection to some characteristic of yours, even though that objection seems to you to be unjustifiable. Such

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objection might be against one's creed, color, race, personality, or former occupation.

Psychological Test

In some of the large companies the applicant for a position is given a psychological test, somewhat similar to those given in the U. S. Army, to determine the applicant's mental qualities. One of the drawbacks to the value of these tests, in my opinion, is that the applicant who has never taken one often does not do himself full justice because of its newness to him and because of the strangeness of his surroundings. It is advisable, therefore, unless you have taken such tests before and are acquainted with their operations, that you take the test below for practice.

**READ THE GENERAL DIRECTIONS BEFORE YOU
DO ANYTHING ELSE.**

GENERAL DIRECTIONS:

Do what the printed instructions tell you to do.

Do not ask the examiner any questions about the examination.

Do not ask any other person who is taking the examination any questions or watch anyone to see what he or she does.

Work as rapidly as you can without making any mistakes.

If you do make a mistake, correct it neatly.

Do 1 first, then 2, then 3, and so on.

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1.—Write your name and permanent address here:

Instructions for 2, 3, and 4:

After each word printed below you are to write some word, according to the further directions. Write plainly, but as quickly as you can. If you cannot think of the right word in about three seconds, go ahead to the next.

2.—Write opposites of the words in this column, as shown in the first three:

weak—strong
fast—slow
large—small
dull—
smooth—
late—
tight—
soft—
defeated—
clean—
below—
finished—
true—

3.—Write words that fit the words in this column, as shown in the first three:

cancel—contract	fold—
erase—words	seal—
publish—books	plan—
shut—	ride—
fight—	steal—
attack—	build—
	dig—

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4.—Write words that tell what sort of thing each thing named is, as shown in the first three:

cat—animal	Fifth Avenue—
measles—disease	Baltimore—
pear—fruit	beef—
cod—	Saturday Evening Post—
oak—	violet—
four—	morphine—
April—	

5.—Follow out the directions given below as quickly as you can, but be careful to notice just what they say:

With your pencil make a dot under one of the following letters M N O P Q; underline the shortest of the three words: pencil, ink, paper; if July 4 is called Independence Day write "No" here —; but if not, make a cross here —; put a vertical line between the fourth and fifth letters of the word money; give a wrong answer to the question: How many months are in a year —; if lead is lighter than cork complete the equation $2+2=$; but if lead is heavier than cork complete the equation $3+3=$; write any figure except 7 in this space —; write yes whether Chicago is in Indiana or not —; now if the sun rises in the East put two crosses here — but if not, put a circle here — or a square here —; be sure to put three ciphers between these two figures 4—6. Notice these two numbers: 3, 5; if a dollar is worth more than a dime write the smaller number in this space —; but if not, write the larger number in this space —. Give a correct answer to the question: Is air heavier than water —; repeat the answer here —. Do nothing here ($8\times5=$) unless you skipped the preceding question. If you are more than 60 years old write the year of your birth in this space —; but if you are less than 60 years old write the present year in this space —. Now

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write the first letter of your first name and the last letter of your last name at the end of this line —.

6.—Add 17 to each of these numbers. Write the answers as shown in the first three:

29—46

18—35

60—77

64

61

49

71

62

33

57

38

68

28

74

65

53

41

67

50

25

42

40

58

7.—Get the answers to these problems as quickly as you can.

1. What number minus 16 equals 20?
2. A man spent two-thirds of his money and had \$8 left. How much had he at first?
3. At 15 cents a yard, how much will 7 feet of cloth cost?
4. A man bought land for \$100. He sold it for \$120, gaining \$5 an acre. How many acres were there?
5. If three-fourths of a gallon of oil costs 9 cents, what will 7 gallons cost?

Practical Tests

Sometimes a practical test is given. For example: an applicant for a position as stenographer might be asked to take down a letter

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and then transcribe it on the typewriter; an applicant for a position as correspondent in the collection department might be requested to show his ability to dictate a collection letter handling a certain case. In every instance the applicant should be ready and willing to take the test and to show what he can do. An example of a practical test given to typists and stenographers is shown below:

TESTS FOR TYPISTS AND STENOGRAPHERS.

SPELLING TEST

INSTRUCTIONS:

Below you will find a list of words, some spelled correctly and some incorrectly. *Place a check after each word that is spelled incorrectly.* Do this as quickly as possible, but with care.

List of Words

absurd	grammer
accept	existance
accidently	influence
addressed	likly
accross	despair
alright	consience
already	beleive
parrallel	Feburary
expence	muscle
posession	nickle
vegetable	interceed
vacency	immitative
exceed	occurr

[The examiner then sometimes dictates those words which have been wrongly checked or overlooked.]

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STENOGRAPHIC TEST

Examiner says: "Please take down the following letter. If I am dictating too slowly, say 'Faster.'"

The examiner then dictates from a letter he holds. After he has given the dictation, he asks the applicant to transcribe on the machine.

[In taking this test, remember that accuracy is the most important point and that you will be judged by it chiefly.]

GRAMMAR TEST

Correct every grammatical mistake that occurs in the following sentences by crossing out the error and writing just above it the correct form:

1. The work was done by John and I.
2. He says that he don't want to receive any more supplies.
3. In this office was found the missing letters.
4. Either the railroad or the shipping department are at fault.
5. Frank and I am going to see him to-morrow.
6. That kind of a letter seldom secures results.
7. We haven't no more No. 3 files in stock.
8. They had ought to of sent the goods long ago.
9. You may employ whoever you wish.
10. Do the work like I showed you.

When You Are Asked to Write a Letter of Application

It is the custom of many employers at the end of the personal interview to ask the applicant to write a letter of application for the position. This request often puzzles applicants because they do not see the reason for it in view of the

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fact that the prospective employer has just finished interviewing them. Here, therefore, are some of the reasons for this practice:

1. The employer may want the written application to refresh his mind when he is going through the final process of selecting one applicant from many.
2. He may want it so that he may judge further of your ability to write or to think.
3. He may desire to keep it on file.
4. He may ask for it to discourage those who are only half-hearted about desiring the position. He knows that the applicants who greatly desire the position will persist in their efforts to land it.

Such a letter should go into more detail than does the ordinary letter of application, for you know that the prospective employer is interested and will read it through. A letter of this type may begin somewhat as follows:

Dear Sir:

At the personal interview this morning you asked me to write a letter of application giving you all details about my education, experience, and so forth, and telling why I believe I shall make good in the position you are going to fill. In accordance with your request I wish to present the following detailed information about myself:

If you are asked, also, to answer in your letter such specific questions as, "Why do you think you can do this work?" you should answer them in the manner shown on page 170.

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Following Up the Interview by Letter

After the applicant has returned from the personal interview he will find it advisable not to fold his hands and wait for the decision of the prospective employer. If he really wants the job, he should keep after it. A method that has proved itself to be effective is as follows: Immediately after the interview, or as soon thereafter as possible, and while it is still fresh in his mind, the applicant should write a follow-up letter. In this letter he should first thank the interviewer for his courtesy. Then he should emphasize any points in his experience and any other qualifications that would indicate that he is the man for the place. Such a letter can be made especially strong in view of the fact that the applicant, after the interview, has now a better idea of the job. In the light of this knowledge, he can show more exactly why he believes he can do the work.

A letter of this type, arriving as it does on the next day when the prospective employer is considering the four or five or more applicants he has interviewed, is bound to make a decidedly favorable impression on him. Because of the originality of the idea, and because such a letter indicates persistency, the applicant who wrote it is brought sharply to his attention. Often

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such a letter is just the thing that helps the prospective employer to decide on his man. The following letter will illustrate:

Dear Sir:

First of all I want to thank you for your courtesy in granting me, at this morning's interview with you, the opportunity of telling you why I think I can fill to your satisfaction the position of office manager of your New York office.

In the course of our conversation you asked me how I should go about improving the quality of work done by the typists and stenographers. I told you of the plan we are using in our office in standardizing this work. You may be interested, therefore, in looking over the accompanying loose-leaf binder of Instructions for Stenographers, Typists, and Dictating-machine Operators. I wrote this for my office about a year ago. By making a few changes to conform with your present practice and by adding several new ideas, I could have ready a similar manual for your office within two weeks.

If I am successful in securing the position, I will first make a study of the whole department. Then I will take up each function in turn and attempt to put it on a more efficient basis.

Yours truly,

IX

WHEN YOU HAVE HAD NO EXPERIENCE

"The law of worthy life is fundamentally the law of strife; it is only through labor and painful effort, by grim energy and resolute courage, that we move on to better things."—ROOSEVELT.

A Discouraging Obstacle

PERHAPS the most discouraging obstacle that bars the way of the man or woman just beginning business life is the question, "What has been your experience?" When the applicant has told the prospective employer that he has had no experience in business or in the particular kind of work for which he is applying, the latter often says, "I am sorry, but we have to have an experienced worker." Time and again is the beginner met with this question about experience, until finally he becomes greatly discouraged. Thinking, and sometimes knowing, that he could do the work if he were given a chance, he considers that all business men are hard-hearted.

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In order to get the right point of view on this matter, however, just consider for a moment the employer's side. Suppose that you are an employer and that you have advertised for a bookkeeper. And suppose, still further, that you are interviewing applicants for the position. Would you prefer to hire a man who has had two years of actual experience to hiring an applicant whose chief qualification for the position is that he studied bookkeeping for a year in a high school? And if you were hiring workers for your company, wouldn't you give preference to applicants who have had experience instead of to those who have had none, other things being equal? You probably would; and so you can't blame the employer for looking out for his own interests in these matters, because you would probably do the same thing yourself.

The inexperienced applicant will always have a harder time getting a job than will the experienced one; and the former may as well realize it now so that he will know that he has to expect it. But it should be remembered that everyone now in business started at some time as an inexperienced worker; and that most of those who are now looking for their first job, and who are finding it hard to get because of lack of business experience, will within a year be working and getting their experience. John D. Rockefeller,

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himself, had a very hard time getting his first position. In his book, *Random Reminiscences*, he says:

I tramped the streets for days and weeks, asking merchants and storekeepers if they didn't want a boy.

He finally got a job, and so will anyone else who is persistent and refuses to become discouraged.

Meeting the Question at the Interview

The big point to bear in mind is that you should not allow your lack of experience to become a bugbear. It *seems* to be a more difficult obstacle than it *actually* is, for although you may lack actual business experience you usually can present evidence to the effect that in all probability you will make good in the job. Moreover, in a personal interview the employer is able to judge you and to determine, from the way you talk and handle yourself, whether, despite your inexperience, you would not make a good worker. For example, suppose that a well-dressed and well-built young fellow applied for a job as traveling salesman. If he were able to talk well, appeared bright, seemed self-reliant, even though he had had no experience, many a sales manager would consider him good material and would hire him.

The fault with most applicants is that when

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they are asked the question, "What has been your experience?" they crumple up, say they haven't had any, and wait for their dismissal. Instead they should have come prepared for that question and ready to answer it boldly by telling *what good qualifications they do possess and why they think that they will be good workers*. Since you can't prove by your experience that you are a good man for the place, the burden is upon you to prove in some other way why you *probably* will be a good man. *But go to the interview prepared to prove it.*

Proving your ability is easier in some types of business occupations than in others. For instance, the stenographer who is looking for her first job when met by the question, "What experience have you had?" can answer as follows: "I have had no experience in a business office, but if you will dictate a letter to me I will take it down, transcribe it on the machine, and show you the kind of work I can do."

The same is also true of a typist who can say, "Let me copy a letter on the typewriter and then I can show you how well I can type." But an inexperienced applicant who is applying for a job as salesman can't prove his ability by actual test. Accordingly he must prove by other evidence that in all probability he will make a good salesman. He might answer, for

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instance, as follows: "No, I have never had any actual experience selling, but I feel that I can make good at it because I like to meet and talk to people. I have been told that selling is hard work, but in spite of that I still feel that I want to get into the selling field." His earnestness, his appearance, his ability to talk—all these are taken into consideration and help to discount his lack of experience.

Whenever, therefore, you cannot prove your ability by an actual test of some kind, you should try to prove it by logical reasoning, and by showing how the qualifications you *do* possess indicate your fitness. This is a problem to be solved by the applicant himself.

How to Get Around It in the Letter

What applies to proving ability at the personal interview also applies in the matter of writing a letter of application. Suppose, for illustration, that a man is applying for a job as bookkeeper. Instead of attempting to prove his ability to keep books satisfactorily by telling of his experience, as the experienced bookkeeper would, he might touch on this point as follows:

I studied single and double entry bookkeeping for two years at the High School of Commerce and received an average of 95 per cent. I know the

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work thoroughly, for I took especial interest in this subject and studied it hard. I am submitting a sample ledger page that shows that I do neat, careful, accurate work. You can also judge my handwriting and figuring from it.

It may be advisable to note that you should not say in your letter that you have had "no experience." If you do, this phrase may catch the eye of the prospective employer and cause a negative reaction. It seldom is good policy to tell what you do not know or do not possess in the way of qualifications. You should try to get the job on what you do have. *Tell what you do have, not what you don't have.*

The typist who is applying for a job by letter can say the following to prove her ability:

I typed this letter myself. It will show you the kind of work I do. I always try to do neat, accurate, and well-arranged work, for I realize the importance of such qualities.

X

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Getting Friends Interested

IN your endeavor to make your campaign to secure a better position complete, it is well not to overlook the possibilities of securing the job you want by letting your friends know that you wish to secure a certain kind of position. It often happens that your friends in business may hear of opportunities that otherwise would not come to your attention. If, therefore, you can get several of your friends to be on the lookout for opportunities, you may thus secure "leads" that you can follow up.

If you are unable to call upon your friends in person to enlist their aid, you can write a letter to them describing the kind of job you are looking for and giving them an outline of your education, experience, and other qualifications. Then from time to time you can follow up these friends to keep them interested in trying to find a job for you.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Employment Agencies

The opportunities offered by high-class employment agencies should not be overlooked. It often happens that a large concern in immediate need for a man will consult an employment agency.

Some employment agencies really do handle high-class jobs. The only drawback, however, to the use of employment agencies is that the fee charged for securing the position is often rather high.

Keeping Up Your Morale

When a man is out of a job for several weeks and has found difficulty in securing the kind of job he desires at the salary he wants, he is very likely to become discouraged. This discouragement brings about a sort of mental depression that still further injures his chances of securing a job because, as he loses courage, he impresses the prospective employer at the personal interview, or by the hopeless tone of his letters, with the fact that he does not possess much backbone or spirit.

The prospective employer likes to hire a man who is confident of his ability to do the work; and, certainly, if the applicant has allowed his lack of success in securing a job to discourage

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him, he is very likely to show lack of confidence in himself. The applicant should, therefore, fight as hard as he can to maintain his morale. He must appear confident and self-reliant. He cannot afford to appear weak and discouraged.

Discouragement often causes an applicant to make another kind of mistake. He sets out with the firm idea of getting a specific kind of position at a certain salary. Disappointed by not getting what he wants, he is very likely to take anything he can get, both in the kind of position and in the salary offered, with the result that he accepts a position that he does not care much for and within a short time must, if he desires to get the right kind of job, start the whole process of looking for a position over again. Until he has secured another job, it is, therefore, highly desirable that one should hold on to his present job even though he does not like it and even though he believes that he is not being treated right with respect to promotion, either in rank or in salary. He thus can avoid discouragement and the mistakes brought about by discouragement. Moreover, a man who is already in a position can get another one much more easily than can a man who is out of a position, for most employers are suspicious of the man who is out of a job.

XI

YOUR PRESENT EMPLOYER OFFERS YOU YOUR BEST OPPORTUNITY

"The men who have succeeded are men who have chosen one line and stuck to it."

—ANDREW CARNEGIE.

"Real success is won only by hard, honest, and persistent toil."—CHARLES M. SCHWAB.

Distant Fields Look Green, But—

YOUR present employer usually offers you the best opportunity for a better job—through promotion. If you like the kind of work you are in, or, rather, if you do not feel a *strong* desire to go into another field, you should carefully consider the chances for advancement with your present employer before looking elsewhere for them. Other and distant fields always *look* greener, but when you get into them you often find that they are not so green as they looked.

Your present employment offers you better opportunities, as a rule, because you are acquir-

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ing from day to day something that is making you more and more valuable—experience in a specific kind of business and with a particular company.

If your ability is not immediately recognized and rewarded, do not, as so many workers do, become discouraged and lose ambition. Determine to fight all the harder to deserve and to command recognition. It is always darkest just before dawn. And many a man has thrown aside two or three years of valuable experience to go into a new field because the desired promotion in rank did not materialize when he thought it should; whereas, if he had stuck to the job for a short time longer he would have got it. Plug along, work hard, and—above all—don't get into the rut of taking things easy. Keep your ambition alive. Ability must sooner or later be recognized and rewarded, for employers are looking for just that thing in their employees. You have heard all this before, and so have most employees—but why haven't they acted on it? Is it that they didn't believe it? No, I think not. It is because they found that they didn't care to pay the cost of success—*work*

Alfred C. Bedford, the president of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, in the course of an interview reported by B. C. Forbes, editor of *Forbes' Magazine*, said:

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When I got a position as an office boy I was always on the alert to make myself useful. I often volunteered, after my own work was done, to count the cash for the cashier, to draw off balances for the bookkeeper, make up vouchers, carry the books to the safe, and do every little job I could see needed doing. I was soon assigned to do the running for an expert accountant who came to reorganize the whole system of accounts and bookkeeping. Instead of merely getting out vouchers and other papers that he called for, I asked to be allowed to count up columns of figures, compare vouchers, and do the statistical drudgery. In appreciation, the accountant began to teach me not only ordinary bookkeeping, but the principles underlying accountancy and the fundamentals of recording and analyzing business transactions.

I applied myself diligently to this work, studying at home at night, and it was not long before I graduated from office boy to a position of greater responsibility than that of a routine bookkeeper. This first promotion I attributed to my willingness to do more than was expected of me and to the insight I then obtained into business methods. This gave me a grasp and a vision such as the average clerk in an office too often fails to cultivate because of his machine-like performance of his allotted tasks.

My advice to every young man would be this:

Do everything you are told—and do it with all your heart and strength—willingly, cheerfully, and enthusiastically—and then look around for more work to do.

Don't measure your work by hours, but by what it is possible for you to accomplish from the time you enter in the morning—and be early rather than late—until the place closes in the evening; and don't quit the moment the place officially closes if there is work still to be done.

Read and study and think along the lines of your business. Learn what it is all about, what service it contributes to making the world go round more comfortably and efficiently.

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Cultivate the habit of looking ahead, of acquiring as much foresight as possible. Have imagination and vision.

Thomas E. Wilson, who worked his way upward from checking freight cars in the stockyards of Chicago to the presidency of Wilson & Co., tells in *Men Who Are Making America* of the reasons for his success, in the following words:

I am no wonder. I am no brainier or wiser than any number of other people. My whole success is traceable to the fact that I have enjoyed my work and have given to it the best in me. No job ever was too big for me to tackle. That is the foundation of success nine times out of ten—having confidence in yourself and applying yourself with all your might to your work.

Too many men try to travel on a reputation. They stand upon their past achievements rather than daily press on toward further achievements. You cannot stake your future on the past, but on the present. A fellow must throw his whole energy into everything he undertakes and feel keenly that on this one thing, whatever it be he is doing, depends his whole future.

Look Before You Leap

You may at one time or another feel that you are not receiving the proper kind of treatment from your present employer with respect to advancement and salary, and because of this feeling you may consider making a change to another concern. Before doing this it is very wise to examine yourself thoroughly to ascertain

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whether you are at fault; perhaps the reason you are not getting along well in your present position lies with yourself. Certainly, if it is true that the fault is your own, you will be only jumping from the frying pan into the fire by making a change. The fault that holds you back in one concern will, in all probability, hold you back in another concern.

It may be that you are being held back from advancement because your superior has the idea that you are a brilliant but not a steady worker; or it may be that he does not like the attitude you take toward your work. So, before deciding to throw away the valuable experience you have acquired in your present place, make sure that it is not your own fault that you aren't getting ahead.

If there is a personal friction between you and your superior, consider whether or not this can be removed in some way. It is usually much easier to remove the friction than to secure a new job.

If you find you do not like the kind of work you are in, it is best to try first to secure a change within your own organization to a job that you do like. It is often wiser to adopt this method of getting into a job for which you feel yourself to be better fitted than it is to seek a connection with another company. By so doing you will

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not lose the benefit of the experience you have gained in your present company. Moreover, your knowledge of your organization and of how it conducts its business will still be of advantage to you after you have secured the desired change.

Selling Your Services to Your Employer

As has been said elsewhere in this book, two men of about equal business ability do not always advance with the same speed. One man may be a little quicker than the other in seeing and grasping an opportunity; he may be a little luckier in having an opportunity come his way; or, again, he may be better able to "sell" himself to his employer.

Selling your services to the employer does not mean boot-licking or fawning servility; it means making the employer realize that you are a valuable employee. How this may be brought about is a problem to be solved by the individual himself. In certain types of work it is easier than in others. For example: the salesman is usually able to show by the amount of his sales just how valuable he is. At least two men with whose careers I am acquainted owe their success in large measure to the fact that they advertised themselves by having had published in business publications articles that they had

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written. But if your work is of a type such that it is not so easy to demonstrate your value, the problem is extremely difficult.

Industriousness and good work on the part of the worker are perhaps the surest ways in the long run, but even here it often takes some act of originality or of initiative to bring yourself sharply to the favorable attention of the employer. A suggestion on how to increase sales, a plan for cutting costs, an idea on improving the work—any of these may be the means of impressing the employer with the fact that you are not an ordinary worker. And such things *will* impress him, for employees who take a real interest in the business are rare. A valuable book to read in this connection is *Imagination in Business*, by L. F. Deland.

James B. Forgan, president of the First National Bank of Chicago, who forced his own way upward from a position as a bank clerk, said in an interview reported in the *American Magazine*:

If a man is promoted solely on seniority he is worth exactly the market rate in his locality for such a position. Not a cent more! For he has put himself into the class of a marketable commodity, instead of into a personality class. He has no trade-mark which sets him apart from the common run of men in his position.

A commodity can be bought and sold in the market. It brings only the prevailing price—no more. But if you

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get out of the commodity class, by demonstrating that you possess individual abilities—such as exceptional thoroughness, or unusual industry, or uncommon initiative—then you become a specialty. And, as such, you can, in effect, fix your own salary.

George W. Perkins, who rose from office boy to the highest-salaried insurance position in the world, and then became a partner of J. P. Morgan & Co., said in an interview reported by B. C. Forbes, editor of *Forbes' Magazine*:

My own method has been to live every day as though it was the only day I had to live, and to crowd everything possible into that day. Pay no attention to the clock or what you are paid, but work and live for all there is in it—just as you would play football—and everything else will take care of itself.

At the head of the table there is always more room. It is the tree that grows and grows until it overtops the others that gets the most air and sunshine. The thing for the young man to do is to strive with all the energy he possesses to excel in actual ability. Pull is not necessary. Nor should a young man bother too much about his wages—I never asked an increase in my life. You can command sooner or later that which you are entitled to—if you pre-eminently deserve it.

But you have got to be ultra-proficient in some particular thing. You must stand out and do it better than the fellows around you, whether you are an office boy, a stenographer, or an executive. You must use your head as well as your hands. Don't be afraid to do extra work lest it interfere with your theater-going—I don't go to the theater half a dozen times during the winter; not that I don't like it, but there are other things more worth doing.

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Prepare for the Next Job

"The secret of success in life," said Disraeli, "is for a man to be ready for his opportunity when it comes." Hard, persistent work; ambition; loyalty—all these will carry a man gradually towards his goal. But the really big successes come to those men who have made themselves ready in some special way; and when their opportunity does come have the knowledge and self-confidence to reach out and grasp it.

The man who is going to get ahead asks himself such questions as these: "What am I doing day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year, to build up my personal assets, my business knowledge, my producing ability? Am I directing my personal career with intelligence and foresight?" He not only wishes to succeed, but is going about it in a businesslike manner.

If you are really desirous of advancing in business, you will appreciate that there are two points always to be kept in mind:

1. Master your present job.
2. Prepare for the next job.

Study your business, go to the library and draw out books on it, read the trade papers, watch how the work of the next job is done, and plan

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how you would improve on it if you got it. Knowledge is power, and the more you know of your business the more valuable you become to the employer.

The man of to-day [says Edward Bok, in his lecture entitled "Keys to Success"] who has to do with the employment of men witnesses no sadder sight than the procession of unemployed men that are exemplary in life, have some general intelligence, are respectably honest, and frequently of good social position, and yet who can get only menial, routine, poorly paid positions. The reason for this is that they have no definite knowledge, no special experience. They can do "almost anything," they say, which really means that they can do nothing. The successful man of to-day is he who knows how to do one thing better than most other men can do it.

Your Name Is Your Trade-mark

Just as the picture of the dog listening to a phonograph stands as the guarantee of the quality of the Victor talking machine, just as the picture of the Rock of Gibraltar represents the strength of The Prudential Insurance Company, and just as the word "Tiffany" on a piece of jewelry assures quality—just so should you try to make your name stand for something good. For your name is your trade-mark—the mark you will bear throughout your business career—the mark that will mean something good, bad, or indifferent to your employer and to others in your field of business.

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It is said that the name "Royal Baking Powder" is valued at \$13,000,000. At what price do you value your name? If you can make your name stand for efficiency, accuracy, intelligence, loyalty, and the other qualities so highly prized in business, it will be worth a great deal. And it is your problem to make your name worth something.

The name "Royal Baking Powder" (or the trade-mark of any other now favorably known article) was worth little at the beginning. But as years went by, people began to realize that this name stood for quality—that they could always rely upon it. And that is what you should set out to do with your name, your trade-mark. Make your name stand for quality of work, for reliability, and as time goes on your name will become more and more valuable.

Development of Personal Qualities

In preparing yourself for advancement into a better position, you should not overlook the importance of a persistent effort to develop day by day such personal qualities as courtesy, tact, ability to talk effectively, and an agreeable personality. The value of these qualities in business often escapes the attention of men who are trying to get ahead; yet they are as essential as a knowledge of business, for business itself is, after

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all, a matter of human relations. It cannot be denied that the man who is able to make friends of the persons he meets in business possesses an asset that is worth thousands of dollars both to himself and to his employer. Such a man always has an easier time in getting what he desires than does the man whose personality is merely neutral or positively repelling. Most of us are only too willing to help the man we like. And we like the man who is courteous and tactful, and who possesses an agreeable personality.

Some men go through life sadly handicapped because of the poor impression made by their personality upon their employers and other persons with whom they come into contact in their business life—and they never know why progress comes so hard for them. It may be that they are shy and self-conscious when they are talking to their superiors, or that they are of an excitable temperament that causes them “to fly off the handle” easily, or that they have not yet realized the value of being courteous—but whatever it is, it is one of the causes of their being held back and why they will continue to be held back until the fault is remedied.

It is for these reasons, therefore, that you who are seeking to forge ahead cannot afford to neglect and should constantly strive to improve your personal qualities. Train yourself to be

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more courteous, more tactful, to speak more effectively; exert yourself to find out the personal qualities that appeal to the persons you meet and then set out to acquire or improve them, for just as it is possible to develop your muscles by exercise, just so is it possible to develop the personal qualities that will be of such great value to you in your business career.

Think!

I know of no better way in which to conclude this book than by giving space to the utterances of two of America's most successful men—Thomas A. Edison, the inventor, and Charles M. Schwab, of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation.

In an interview given to the *American Magazine*, Mr. Edison, who is universally acknowledged to be one of the greatest thinkers and workers the world has ever produced, speaks as follows:

Every man has some forte—something he can do better than he can do anything else. Many men, however, never find the job they are best fitted for. And often this is because they do not *think* enough. Too many men drift lazily into any job suited or unsuited for them; and when they don't get along well they blame everybody and everything except themselves. I am going to have this placard put all over the plant [said Mr. Edison. The placard read as follows]:

There is no expedient to which a man will not resort to avoid the real labor of thinking.—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

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It is because they do not use their thinking powers that so many people have never developed a creditable mentality. The brain that is used responds. The brain is exactly like any other part of the body; it can be strengthened by proper exercise, by proper use. Put your arm in a sling and keep it there for a considerable length of time, and when you take it out you find that you can't use it. In the same way the brain that isn't used suffers atrophy.

In his book *Succeeding With What You Have*, Mr. Schwab, who rose in a few short years from a position as a dollar-a-day stake driver to the presidency of the Carnegie Steel Company, at a salary of a million dollars a year, at the age of thirty-four, makes the following remarks:¹

For thirty-six years I have been moving among working-men in what is now the biggest branch of American industry, the steel business. In that time it has been my good fortune to watch most of the present leaders rise from the ranks, ascend step by step to places of power. These men, I am convinced, are not natural prodigies. They won out by using normal brains to think beyond their manifest daily duty.

American industry is spilling over with men who started life even with the leaders, with brains just as big, with hands quite as capable, and yet one man emerges from the mass, rises sheer above his fellows, and the rest remain.

The men who miss success have two general alibis. "I'm not a genius" is one; the other, "There aren't the opportunities to-day there used to be."

Neither excuse holds. The first is beside the point; the second is altogether wrong.

¹Reprinted from *Succeeding With What You Have*, by permission of The Century Company.

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The thing that most people call "genius" I do not believe in. That is, I am sure that few successful men are so-called "natural geniuses."

There is not a man in power at our Bethlehem steel works to-day who did not begin at the bottom and work his way up, round by round, simply by using his head and his hands a little more freely and a little more effectively than the men beside him. Eugene Grace, president of Bethlehem, worked in the yard when I first knew him. Mr. Snyder was a stenographer; Mr. Mathews, a draftsman. The fifteen men in direct charge of the plants were selected not because of some startling stroke of genius, but because, day in and day out, they were doing little unusual things—thinking beyond their jobs.



APPENDIX

HELPFUL BOOKS ON BUSINESS

"Ample and accurate information is the best step toward success for everyone."—J. J. HILL.

"Read and study and think along the lines of your business."—A. C. BEDFORD.

"You can read my book in an hour, but it cost me a lifetime of concentrated attention."—MONTESQUIEU.

You will find below a list of books on business. This list is by no means complete, and you may not find in it a book on the kind of work you are doing or may wish to do. Yet, in all probability, there are books or magazine articles in existence that will give you the information you desire, or at least will help you to do your own work better, if you will only make it a point to find them.

"Knowledge is power," and the more you know about your business the more valuable you become to your employer. Promotion and increase in salary will follow. The reading and studying of business books will serve to make

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easier the learning of your business and the acquiring of success in your chosen field. The dollar or two spent in purchasing a good business book, or the effort in going to your library to draw it out, will be repaid to you many times over. Resolve to-day to start reading the books that cover your field of work.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND BIOGRAPHY

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie</i>		Houghton Mifflin
<i>Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin</i>		Holt
<i>Theodore Roosevelt</i>		Macmillan
<i>Random Reminiscences of Men and Events</i>	Rockefeller	Doubleday Page
<i>The Americanization of Edward Bok</i>	Bok	Scribners
<i>Life of John Hay</i>	Thayer	Houghton Mifflin
<i>Northcliffe—Britain's Man of Power</i>	Carson	Dodge
<i>Henry Ford's Own Story</i>	Lane	E. O. Jones
<i>Life Story of J. Pierpont Morgan</i>	Hovey	Sturgis Walton
<i>Life of James J. Hill</i>	Pyle	Doubleday Page
<i>Men Who Are Making America</i>	Forbes	Forbes Pub. Co.

ADVERTISING AND SELLING

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Advertising, Its Principles and Practice</i>	Tipper, Hotchkiss, Parsons and Hollingworth	Ronald
<i>Advertising as a Business Force</i>	Cherington	Doubleday Page
<i>Making Type Work</i>	Sherbow	Century
<i>The Psychology of Advertising</i>	Scott	Small Maynard
<i>Influencing Men in Business</i>	Scott	Ronald
<i>The Theory of Advertising</i>	Scott	Small Maynard
<i>How to Advertise</i>	French	Doubleday Page
<i>Writing an Advertisement</i>	Hall	Houghton Mifflin
<i>Advertising and Selling</i>	Hollingworth	Appleton
<i>Typography of Advertisements</i>	Farrar	Appleton
<i>The Business of Advertising</i>	Callins	Appleton
<i>Advertising the Technical Product</i>	Sloan and Mooney	McGraw Hill
<i>Effective House Organs</i>	Ramsay	Appleton
<i>Scientific Sales Management</i>	Hoyt	Woolson
<i>Making Advertisements</i>	Durstine	Scribners
<i>Selling the Consumer</i>	Mahin	Doubleday Page
<i>Human Nature in Business</i>	Kelly	Putnam
<i>The Marketing of Farm Products</i>	Weld	Macmillan
<i>Retail Selling</i>	Hall	Funk & Wagnalls
<i>Retail Selling</i>	Nystrom	Ronald
<i>Retail Selling</i>	Fisk	Harper

APPENDIX

ADVERTISING AND SELLING—Continued

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Fundamentals of Salesmanship</i>	Brisco	Appleton
<i>Personal Selling</i>	Stranger	Biddle
<i>Principles of Salesmanship</i>	Whitehead	Ronald
<i>Modern Salesmanagement</i>	Frederick	Appleton
<i>Making More Money in Storekeeping</i>	Hotchkin	Ronald
<i>How to Sell More Goods</i>	Barrett	Harpers
<i>Practical Real Estate Methods</i>	Thirty Experts	Doubleday Page

BOOKKEEPING AND ACCOUNTING

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Bookkeeping—Theory and Practice</i>	Rosenkampff	N. Y. Univ. Press
<i>Modern Illustrative Bookkeeping</i>	Rittenhouse	Amer. Book
<i>Bookkeeping and Accounting</i>	Klein	Appleton
<i>Principles of Accounting</i>	Wildman	N. Y. Univ. Press
<i>Modern Accounting</i>	Hatfield	Appleton
<i>Auditing: Theory and Practice</i>	Montgomery	Ronald
<i>Cost Accounting</i>	Nicholson and Rohrbach	Ronald

BUSINESS ENGLISH AND LETTER WRITING

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Handbook of Business English</i>	Hotchkiss and Kilduff	Harpers
<i>Business English</i>	Hotchkiss and Drew	American Book
<i>Effective Business Letters</i>	Gardner	Ronald
<i>The Literature of Business</i>	Saunders and Creek	Harpers
<i>A Modern English Grammar (Revised)</i>	Buehler	Newton
<i>Business Correspondence (4 v.)</i>	Various authors	A. W. Shaw
<i>Commercial Correspondence</i>	Butler and Burd	Appleton
<i>The Business Man's English</i>	Bartholomew and Hurlbut	Macmillan

BUSINESS LAW

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Business Law</i>	Conyngton and Bergh	Ronald
<i>Elements of Business Law</i>	Huffcut	Ginn
<i>American Business Law</i>	Sullivan	Appleton

CIVIL SERVICE

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>How to Prepare for Civil Service</i>	Cooper	Gregg
<i>Federal Civil Service as a Career</i>	Folts	Putnam
<i>Manual of Examinations</i>	U. S. Civil Service Commission	Washington, D. C.
<i>Civil Service Chronicle</i> (A periodical devoted to civil service. Notices of examinations, etc.)		New York City
<i>The Chief</i> (A periodical devoted to civil service).		New York City

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CREDIT AND COLLECTION WORK

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Credit and Collections</i>	Ettinger and Golieb	Prentice Hall
<i>Retail Credits and Collections</i>	Beebe	Harpers
<i>New Collection Methods</i>	Gardner	Ronald
<i>Art of Collecting</i>	Cassell	Ronald
<i>Mercantile Credits</i>	Care, Elliott, and others	Ronald
<i>Mercantile Credits and Collections</i>	Meyer	Macmillan

FINANCE

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Business Finance</i>	Lough	Ronald
<i>Corporation Finance</i>	Meade	Appleton
<i>Materials of Corporation Finance</i>	Gerstenberg	Prentice Hall
<i>Work of Wall Street</i>	Pratt	Appleton
<i>Practical Bank Operation</i>	Langston	Ronald
<i>The Practical Work of a Bank</i>	Kniffin	Bankers Pub. Co.
<i>Modern Trust Company</i>	Kirkbride and Sterrett	Macmillan
<i>Foreign Exchange Explained</i>	Becher	Macmillan

FOREIGN TRADE

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>A B C of Foreign Trade</i>	Hemius	Bobbs Merrill
<i>Practical Exporting</i>	Hough	Am. Exporter
<i>Exporting to Latin America</i>	Filsinger	Appleton
<i>Foreign Exchange</i>	Whitaker	Appleton
<i>Exporter's Gazetteer of Foreign Markets</i>		Am. Exporter

GENERAL

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Retail Buying</i>	Field	Harpers
<i>Graphic Methods of Presenting Facts</i>	Brinton	Engineering Magazine Co.
<i>Elementary Principles of Economics</i>	Ely and Wicker	Macmillan
<i>Economics of Business</i>	Brisco	Macmillan
<i>Principles of Economics</i>	Fetter	Century
<i>Developing Executive Ability</i>	Gowin	Ronald
<i>Principles of Foreign Trade</i>	Savay	Ronald
<i>Principles of Business</i>	Gerstenberg	Prentice Hall
<i>Principles of Insurance</i>	Gephart	Macmillan
<i>Personal Efficiency in Business</i>	Purinton	McBride
<i>The Business of Life Insurance</i>	Davison	A. S. Barnes
<i>How to Live on Twenty-four Hours a Day</i>	Bennett	Doran
<i>Purchasing</i>	Twyford	D. Van Nostrand
<i>Storing</i>	Twyford	D. Van Nostrand
<i>Ocean Steamship Traffic Management</i>	Huebner	Appleton
<i>Business Organisation and Administration</i>	Haas	Gregg

INSPIRATIONAL

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Men Who Are Making America</i>	Forbes	Forbes Pub. Co.
<i>Imagination in Business</i>	Deland	Harpers
<i>Self-cultivation in English</i>	Palmer	Houghton Mifflin

APPENDIX

INSPIRATIONAL—Continued

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>More Power To You</i>	Barton	Century
<i>Acres of Diamonds</i>	Conwell	Harpers
<i>Obvious Adams</i>	Updegraff	Harpers
<i>Pushing to the Front</i>	Marden	Crowell
<i>Succeeding With What You Have</i>	Schwab	Century
<i>Success Fundamentals</i>	Marden	Crowell

JOURNALISM

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Training for the Newspaper Trade</i>	Seits	Lippincott
<i>Newspaper Writing and Editing</i>	Bleyer	Houghton Mifflin
<i>Newspaper Reporting and Correspondence</i>	Hyde	Appleton
<i>The Writing of News</i>	Ross	Holt

OFFICE WORK

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>The Stenographer's Manual</i>	Kilduff	Harpers
<i>The Private Secretary</i>	Kilduff	Century
<i>Office Administration</i>	Schulze	McGraw Hill
<i>Scientific Office Management</i>	Leffingwell	A. W. Shaw
<i>Office Management</i>	Galloway	Ronald
<i>Indexing and Filing</i>	Hudders	Pitman
<i>Filing Systems</i>	Cope	Appleton
<i>A Textbook of Filing</i>	McCord	

VOCATIONAL

TITLE	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Vocational and Moral Guidance</i>	Davis	Ginn
<i>Starting in Life</i>	Fowler	Little Brown
<i>Choosing a Career</i>	Marden	Bobbs Merrill
<i>Choosing a Vocation</i>	Parsons	Houghton Mifflin
<i>How to Get a Position and How to Keep It</i>	Hall	Punk & Wagnalls
<i>Careers for Women</i>	Filene	Houghton Mifflin
<i>Occupations</i>	Gowin and Wheatley	Ginn
<i>The Girl and the Job</i>	Hoerie and Saltsberg	Holt
<i>Business Employments</i>	Allen	Ginn
<i>Advertising as a Vocation</i>	Allen	Macmillan
<i>Developing Executive Ability</i>	Gowin	Ronald

PERIODICALS

The list of periodicals shown is by no means complete; it is given only to indicate the completeness with which the business and trade fields are covered by periodicals specializing in those fields. In addition, articles touching on

HOW TO CHOOSE AND GET A BETTER JOB

all types of business matters are constantly appearing in general magazines.

<i>System</i> (A monthly magazine on business)	A. W. Shaw Co.	Chicago, Ill.
<i>Printers' Ink</i> (A weekly magazine on advertising and selling)	Printers' Ink Pub. Co.	New York City
<i>Factory</i> (A monthly magazine on factory work)	A. W. Shaw Co.	Chicago, Ill.
<i>Dry Goods Economist</i> (Weekly)		New York City
<i>Hardware Age</i> (Weekly)	David Williams Co.	New York City
<i>Advertising and Selling</i> (Weekly)	Advertising and Selling Co.	New York City
<i>Modern Grocer</i> (Weekly)		Chicago, Ill.
<i>The Engineering Magazine</i> (Monthly)	David Williams Co.	New York City
<i>The Building Age</i> (Monthly)	Hill Publishing Co.	New York City
<i>Engineering News</i> (Weekly)		New York City
<i>Drug Topics</i> (Monthly)	Ronald Press	New York City
<i>Administration</i> (Monthly)	Ronald Press	New York City
<i>Journal of Accountancy</i> (Monthly)	Forbes Pub. Co.	New York City
<i>Forbes' Magazine</i> (Semi-monthly)	Crowell Pub. Co.	New York City
<i>The American Magazine</i> (Monthly)		
Usually publishes a number of interesting and inspiring articles on business success. Educational and inspirational.)		

THE END

